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ABSTRACT

The National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) is the third in a series of longitudinal studies sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics. The NELS:88 is being conducted in several waves, beginning with a base year experience of approximately 25,000 eighth graders. This report profiles the family characteristics and the level of involvement reported by the parents of 1988 eighth graders, using the base year survey and dropout data from the first follow-up. About 93 percent of the parents of the first year sample were interviewed to provide information about home life and family experiences. The parent component is not, however, a representative sample of eighth graders' parents. Their inclusion is linked to the student participants. This study examined child-directed involvement, including activities such as parent-child discussions and school-directed involvement such as parent-teacher association membership and volunteering in the school. There was some indication that parent involvement was related to whether or not students scored below the basic level in reading or mathematics proficiency, but there was a strong relationship between parent involvement and whether or not a student dropped out of school between the 8th and 10th grades. There are 26 tables and 18 figures presenting study findings. (SLD)

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Statistical Analysis Report July 1992

National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988

A Profile of Parents of Eighth Graders

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July 1992

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Highlights

The Family

Although most 1988 eighth graders lived with both natural parents or with one natural and one stepparent, nearly 20 percent of students were from single-parent families.

- About 65 percent of 1988 eighth graders lived with both natural parents. Among the remaining students, most lived only with their mother (17 percent) or with their mother and a male guardian (12 percent). About 2 percent of eighth graders lived with a single father, and 3 percent lived with their father and a female guardian. Less than 2 percent (1.4 percent) of eighth graders lived in two-parent families that included neither of their natural parents.

- In about 20 percent of two-parent families, one or both parents did not complete high school, while in 30 percent of two-parent families, one or both parents graduated from college.

- In single-parent families about 19 percent of single mothers and 12 percent of single fathers did not graduate from high school; 11 percent of single mothers and 25 percent of single fathers graduated from college.

- In a majority of two-parent families, both parents worked (67 percent); only the father was employed in 26 percent of these families, while in 3.4 percent of two-parent families, neither parent was employed. Seventy-four percent and 90 percent, respectively, of single mothers and fathers were employed.

- Almost one-quarter of eighth graders' families had annual incomes of less than $15,000.

Participation of Parents in Eighth Graders' Schooling

In the NELS:88 survey, a number of questions were asked of the parents in order to determine the degree to which they participated in their eighth grader's schooling. These questions ranged from discussing school experiences with their child or restricting television viewing to school-related activities such as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) participation.

- Most parents (79 percent) reported regularly discussing their eighth grader's current school experiences with their child.

- A majority of parents reported restricting their eighth grader's television viewing: 59 percent monitored programs, 62 percent limited watching on school nights, and 84 percent restricted early or late viewing.

- Nearly one-third (29 percent) of parents reported seldom or never helping with their child's homework.

- About one-third (32 percent) of parents were PTA members, 36 percent attended PTA meetings at school, and about 19 percent volunteered in the schools.

- Regular participation of parents in their eighth grader's education increased with socioeconomic status and parents' educational attainment for almost all activities, including parent-child discussions, television restrictions, and PTA participation.

- When SES was taken into consideration, single mothers tended to participate in their eighth grader's education at the same or, in some cases, higher levels than two-parent families.

- Within socioeconomic groups, parents of black children tended to report greater participation than did parents of white children; parents of Asian children tended to be less involved than black, Hispanic, or white parents.

- Parents who sent their eighth grader to a private school reported participating in their child's education more frequently than did parents whose eighth grader attended a public school.

Parents' Expectations for their Eighth Grader's Educational Attainment

The education level of parents was related to their expectations for their eighth grader's educational attainment. Highly educated parents expected their child to graduate from college, while parents who did not complete high school were more likely to expect their eighth grader to drop out of high school.

- More than two-thirds of all parents expected their eighth grader to attend college: 38 percent of parents expected their eighth grader to graduate from college, while 20 percent expected their eighth grader to earn an advanced degree.

- Expectations increased with socioeconomic status: more than twice as many high-SES parents (53 percent) expected their eighth grader to graduate from college as low-SES parents (20 percent).

- Forty-two percent of parents of Asian children expected their child to earn an advanced degree. This was almost double the rate of parents of black (24 percent), Hispanic (23 percent), or white children (18 percent).

Parental Involvement and Student Outcomes

There was some indication that parental involvement was related to whether or not students scored below the basic level in reading or math proficiency. Parental involvement, however, was strongly related to whether or not a student dropped out of school between 8th and 10th grade. This was especially true for low-SES students.

- Low-SES students whose parents reported regularly discussing future education plans with their eighth grader were less likely to drop out of school than students whose parents did not engage in such discussions (i.e., 25 percent of students whose parents never discussed post-high school plans dropped out, compared with 13 percent whose parents regularly did so).

- Low-SES students whose parents monitored their television programs or restricted the number of hours they watched on school nights were less likely to drop out of school than students whose parents did not report such restrictions.

- Middle-SES and low-SES students whose parents reported attending PTA meetings were less likely to drop out of school than students whose parents did not attend PTA meetings.

Foreword

The National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) is the third in a series of longitudinal studies sponsored by NCES. The first two were the National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972 (NLS-72) and High School and Beyond (HS&B) which included high school sophomores and seniors beginning in 1980. Whereas NLS-72 and HS&B followed the educational and personal development of students beginning in 10th and 12th grades, NELS:88 begins with 8th graders and is broader in scope than its predecessors. It is being conducted in several waves: the base year survey describes the eighth grade experiences of approximately 25,000 participants and includes additional surveys of teachers, parents, and the school administrators. The first followup conducted in the spring of 1990 provides information about the students' transition from 8th to 10th grade as well as information about their 10th grade academic program. The second followup will be conducted in 1992 and will provide comprehensive information about the students' entire high school experience. Additional followups will be conducted at 2-year intervals.

This report profiles the family characteristics and the level of parental involvement reported by the parents of 1988 eighth graders. The analysis primarily uses the 1988 base-year survey, however, dropout data collected from the first followup are also used. About 93 percent of the parents of the NELS:88 eighth grade participants were surveyed providing extensive information about the home life and family experiences of the students. The parent component of the NELS:88 survey is not, however, a representative sample of eighth graders' parents. Their inclusion in the sample is linked to the student participants.

This study examines two different types of parental involvement—child-directed involvement, which includes activities such as parent-child discussions about school experiences and rules applied in the home regarding television viewing; and school-directed involvement, such as PTA membership and volunteering in the school. The NELS:88 survey provides extensive information about these aspects of parental involvement. This study uses this information to develop a profile of parental involvement as well as linking specific types of involvement to student performance in school and to whether or not students drop out of school between the 8th and 10th grades.

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Many MPR staff members also participated in the production of this report: Susan Choy reviewed each draft, Andrea Livingston and Brett Threlkeld edited the report, Keiri Custodio formatted all the tables and Leslie Retallick produced the graphics.

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Introduction

The value of parental participation in children's schooling has long been recognized by educators and researchers alike. However, identifying the specific parental behaviors that directly or indirectly benefit children's education is problematic. "Parental involvement," as defined by researchers, encompasses a multitude of activities, ranging from discussions with the student about school experiences to parents' direct involvement with teachers and schools. In addition, the interaction of key family background characteristics, notably socioeconomic status (SES), must be taken into consideration when examining the impact of parental involvement on student behavior and cognitive outcomes. Despite the analytic complexities and varying definitions of parental involvement, research strongly supports its positive effect on student achievement.[1] This influence has especially been demonstrated in studies concerning younger children.[2]

Some researchers argue that parental involvement can be a powerful mitigator of the effects of low-socioeconomic status.[3] Furthermore, at a time when the American public school education system is under intense scrutiny for its inability to provide equitable programs to poorer and working-class youths, a better understanding of the effects of parental involvement could aid schools in developing programs to enhance such involvement.[4] Successful intervention, however, depends on a more precise understanding of those family experiences that may ameliorate learning problems and foster achievement.

The National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) provides a unique opportunity to study family influences on a nationally representative sample of eighth-grade students. NELS:88 is the most recent in a series of longitudinal studies conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Previous surveys include the National Longitudinal Study of 1972 (NLS-72) and High School and Beyond (HS&B), in which parents were surveyed for only a subset of the sample. On the other hand, NELS:88 included parental-reported information for most students (93 percent) in the sample. Thus, for the first time, we have extensive information about the home life and family experiences for most surveyed students. This information is especially important for eighth graders who are experiencing the pivotal transition between elementary and secondary school and are beginning a new phase in formulating educational experiences that will determine postsecondary education options and, ultimately, career choices.

Goals of the Study

The goals of this study are twofold. First, it will provide a profile of the characteristics of the eighth graders' families, focusing on the sociodemographic characteristics of the students and their families and the relationship between selected family background characteristics and parental involvement in their children's education.

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[1] For a review, see R.D. Hess and S.D. Holloway, "Family and School as Educational Institutions," in R.D. Parke, ed., *Review of Child Development Research*: Vol. 7 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), 179–222; A.E. Henderson, ed., *Parent Participation—Student Achievement: The Evidence Grows* (Columbia, MD: National Committee for Citizens in Education, 1981).

[2] R.S. Becher, *Parent Involvement: A Review of Research and Principles of Successful Practice* (Washington D.C.: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education/National Institute of Education, 1984), ED 247 032.

[3] R. Clark, *Family Life and School Achievement: Why Poor Black Children Succeed and Fail* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

[4] J. Oakes, *Excellence and Equity: The Impact of Unequal Educational Opportunities* (Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, 1990).

Second, the study will provide a closer look at the influences that specific types of parental involvement have on academic achievement and on whether or not American eighth graders drop out of school between the 8th and 10th grades. In this report the following questions are addressed:

- What are the home and family characteristics of American eighth graders?
- How do parents participate in their eighth grader's education, both at home and at school? Specifically, what percentage of parents:
    - Regularly talk to their child about school experiences, high school plans, or educational aspirations after high school?
    - Regulate television watching?
    - Institute rules regarding homework or maintaining a certain grade-point average?
    - Help their child with homework?
    - Contact the school about their child's academic program or performance?
    - Participate in school-related groups such as the PTA?
- How do family background characteristics such as socioeconomic status, race–ethnicity, family composition (e.g., two-parent versus one-parent families), and parents' educational attainment relate to parental involvement?
- How does the type of school (e.g., public versus private) the eighth grader attends relate to the level (or types) of parental involvement?
- How do parents feel about their eighth grader's school (e.g., do they think their child is challenged and that they have an adequate say in school policy)?
- What expectations do parents have for their eighth grader's future education?
- How does parental involvement relate to student achievement or whether or not students drop out of school between the 8th and 10th grades?

Many comparisons among various groups of parents were possible in this analysis. Rather than discuss all possible comparisons, general trends or patterns are highlighted and illustrative examples are given. However, whenever these patterns are noted, the proper statistical tests to verify the pattern was performed. For all comparisons cited in the text, a Student's t-test was used to test the difference. In cases where multiple comparisons were made, the critical value at which significance is found ($p < 0.05$) is adjusted for the number of comparisons possible within a family (Bonferonni adjustment).[5]

Limitations of the Study

NELS:88 is a nationally representative sample of approximately 25,000 1988 eighth graders. The parent component of NELS:88, however, is not a representative sample of eighth graders' parents. Their inclusion in the sample is linked directly to the student participants. Thus, when parent-reported data are presented in this study, they are referenced to the eighth graders (for example, "The percentage of 1988 eighth graders whose parents report..."). Parents were surveyed for approximately 93 percent of the students.[6] The majority of parents who responded were mothers (approximately 85 percent). Therefore, when the results cited in this study refer to parental involvement, with the exception of responses by single fathers, readers should bear in mind that these results primarily reflect the mother's perception of involvement. Most questions, however, were framed in the context of both parents' involvement. For example, in asking how often parents discuss school experiences the following question was posed: "How often do you or your spouse/partner talk with your eighth grader about his or her experiences in school?"

In this analysis, the findings presented combine public and private school data, with the exception of table 1.1 and all findings presented in Chapter 4, where individual school type differences are presented. Parents are often divided into racial–ethnic and sociodemographic subgroups for comparison purposes. Samples for some of these subgroups, such as single fathers, American Indians, minorities in the highest socioeconomic quartile, and students who have dropped out of school, are small. Therefore, differences among these sub-groups, even those that appear to be large, are often not statistically significant.

Finally, it should be remembered that this report is descriptive in nature and that the results presented are from cross-sectional data. Therefore, while associations between parent involvement and student outcomes are noted, these findings are not meant to imply causality.

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[5] Y. Hoschberg and A.C. Tamhane, *Multiple Comparison Procedures*, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1987).

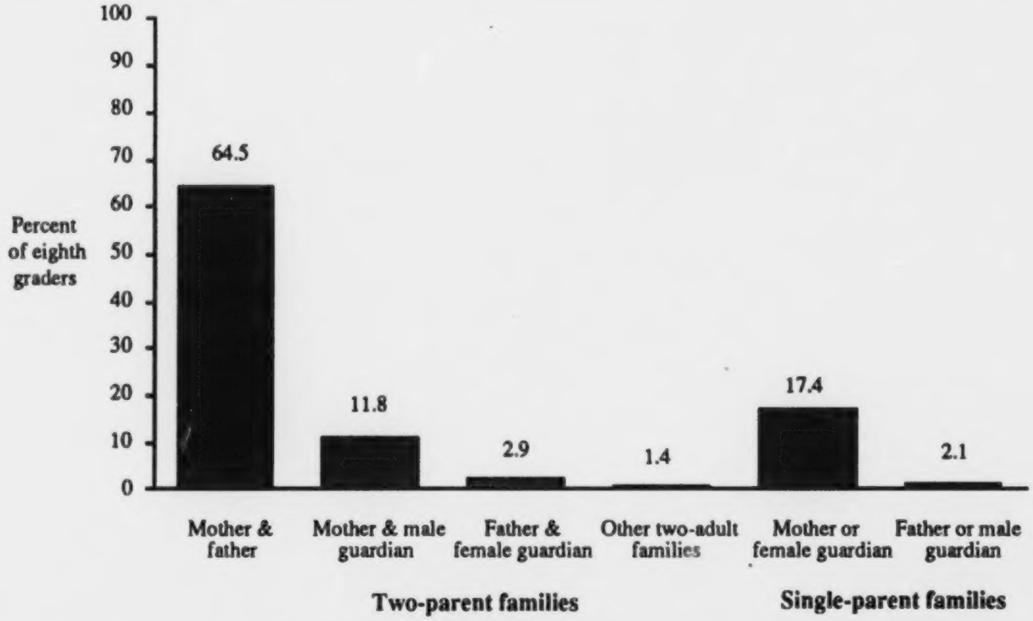
[6] For a discussion of the 7 percent of the students whose parents did not respond to the survey, see the report: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of At Risk Students in NELS:88*, 1992, (Washington D.C.).

Chapter 1

The Families of Eighth Graders

Most 1988 eighth graders lived with both natural parents (65 percent) or with one natural and one stepparent (12 percent lived with their natural mother and stepfather or guardian and 3 percent lived with their natural father and stepmother or guardian). However, a large minority of students (nearly 20 percent) were from single-parent families: 17 percent lived in families headed by a single mother and 2 percent lived in families headed by a single father (figure 1.1). Less than 2 percent of eighth graders lived in two-parent families where neither parent was the child's natural parent.

Figure 1.1--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders who lived in families of various compositions



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Both parents of approximately 8 percent of 1988 eighth graders' were born outside the United States, while in an additional 5 percent of cases one parent was born in a foreign country (table 1.1). In about 11 percent of eighth graders' families, a language other than English was spoken in the home. Spanish was spoken in a majority of the non-English-speaking families (56 percent).[7]

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[7] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *A Profile of The American Eighth Grader*, 1990, (Washington D.C.).

Table 1.1--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported various family and demographic characteristics and levels of income, education, employment status, and age, by school type

			Percent of private school parents		
Characteristic	Percent of all parents	Percent of public school parents	Catholic schools	Other religious schools	Non-religious schools
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Number of siblings in family:					
None or 1	38.2	37.5	41.4	42.4	51.3
2 or 3	42.7	42.6	43.4	43.5	41.1
4 or 5	12.6	13.0	10.8	9.8	6.2
6 or more	6.5	6.9	4.5	4.4	1.5
Birthplace of biological parents	100	100	100	100	100
Both born in U.S.	86.6	87.1	82.8	81.3	86.1
Mother born in U.S., father foreign-born	2.3	2.2	2.9	3.7	2.8
Father born in U.S., mother foreign-born	2.8	2.6	3.6	4.8	2.9
Both foreign-born	7.7	7.4	10.5	9.5	8.1
Either or both unknown	0.6	0.7	0.2	0.6	0.0
Language other than English spoken in home	100	100	100	100	100
Yes	10.9	11.2	9.9	6.3	5.3
No	89.1	88.8	90.1	93.7	94.7
Annual family income	100	100	100	100	100
Less than $15,000	21.1	22.8	9.9	4.7	1.9
$15,000 to $24,999	18.5	19.4	12.4	11.1	8.2
$25,000 to $34,999	18.5	18.5	20.2	17.5	10.6
$35,000 to $49,999	20.5	19.8	28.5	24.2	14.5
$50,000 or more	21.5	19.5	28.9	42.5	64.9
Highest level of parents' education*					
Two-parent families:	100	100	100	100	100
Neither completed high school	7.9	8.8	1.9	1.0	0.0
One completed high school	12.3	13.2	7.5	5.0	2.5
Both completed high school	49.7	50.5	51.6	35.9	20.4
One graduated college	17.7	16.4	25.3	29.3	28.6
Both graduated college	12.4	11.1	13.6	28.8	48.5
Single-parent families (female):	100	100	100	100	100
Did not complete high school	18.5	19.6	7.1	6.0	1.0
Completed high school	70.5	71.2	70.2	52.5	32.5
Graduated college	11.0	9.2	22.8	41.5	66.5
Single-parent families (male):	100	100	100	100	100
Did not complete high school	11.7	12.4	2.4	—	—
Completed high school	63.8	65.2	52.8	—	—
Graduated college	24.5	22.4	44.8	—	—

Table 1.1--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported various family and demographic characteristics and levels of income, education, employment status, and age by school type --Continued

			Percent of private school parents		
Characteristic	Percent of all parents	Percent of public school parents	Catholic schools	Other religious schools	Non-religious schools
Parental employment	100	100	100	100	100
Two-parent families:					
Both parents employed	66.7	66.6	66.7	67.8	64.8
Only father employed	25.9	25.5	28.8	29.4	32.2
Only mother employed	4.0	4.2	2.6	2.1	1.0
Neither employed	3.4	3.7	1.9	0.7	2.0
Single-parent families:	100	100	100	100	100
Female headed, employed	74.1	73.1	84.2	87.7	84.9
Female headed, not employed	25.9	26.9	15.8	12.3	15.1
Male headed, employed	89.6	89.3	91.8	—	—
Male headed, not employed	10.4	10.7	8.2	—	—
Age of parents or guardians:					
Mother or female guardian	100	100	100	100	100
28 years or younger	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.2	0.4
29–33 years	10.9	11.8	5.5	2.4	2.4
34–38 years	32.2	33.1	28.5	22.2	17.9
39–48 years	48.2	46.7	54.8	64.8	72.0
49 years or older	8.0	7.7	10.6	10.5	7.3
Father or male guardian	100	100	100	100	100
28 years or younger	1.1	1.2	0.1	0.0	0.1
29–33 years	5.3	5.7	2.9	0.6	1.9
34–38 years	21.5	22.4	17.8	12.0	8.8
39–48 years	56.3	55.4	59.1	68.1	69.4
49 years or older	15.9	15.3	20.1	19.2	19.9

NOTE: Because of rounding columns may not add to 100 percent.

* Highest level of education can refer to either parent. When only one has graduated from high school or college it means the other has a lower attainment.

— Sample too small (less than 30) for reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Most 1988 eighth graders were from families with 3 or fewer siblings (38 percent with one or no siblings and 43 percent with two or three siblings). However, approximately one-fifth of eighth graders had four or more siblings (13 percent with four or five siblings and 7 percent with six or more).

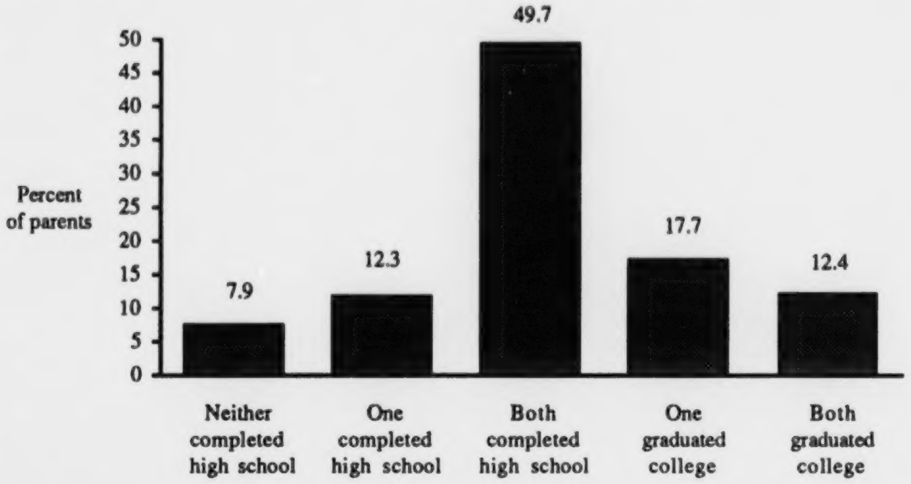
There was a wide range in the annual income levels of eighth graders' families. About one in five (21 percent) were from families whose total income was less than $15,000, while the same proportion of eighth graders were from families with an income of $50,000 or more. The remaining family incomes were about evenly distributed between the ranges of $15,000 and $50,000 per year.

Parents' Education and Employment

Nationally, there is a high degree of educational diversity among parents of eighth graders. In about one-fifth of two-parent families, one or both parents did not graduate from high school (figure 1.2).[8] A similar proportion of single mothers (19 percent) did not complete high school, while 12 percent of single fathers failed to complete high school (figure 1.3).[9]

In 30 percent of two-parent families, at least one parent completed college, including 12 percent where both parents were college graduates (figure 1.2). About 11 percent of single mothers graduated from college, while 25 percent of single fathers did so (figure 1.3).

Figure 1.2--Percentage distribution of 1988 eighth graders in two-parent families, by the highest level of educational attainment of the parents



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

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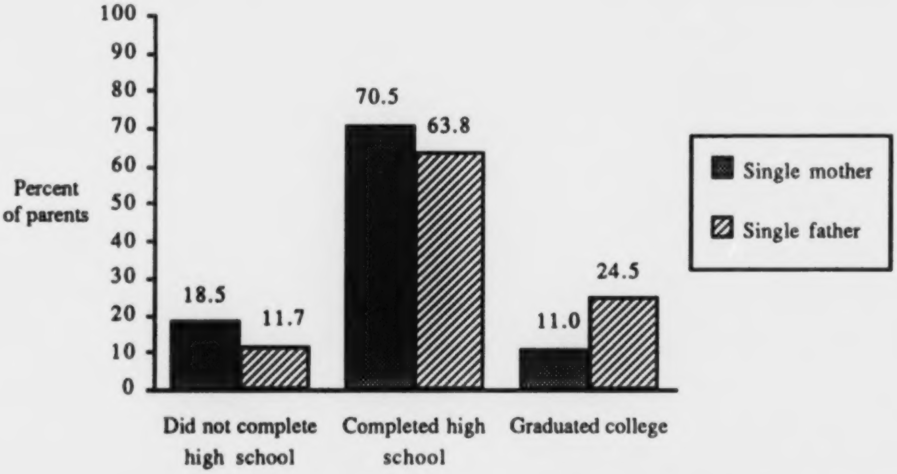
[8] All two-parent families are aggregated when examining levels of education or employment status. The overwhelming majority are natural parents (80 percent), while most of the other families (15 percent) consist of the mother and a stepfather/male guardian.

[9] Throughout the report, single parents are referred to either as single mothers or single fathers. However, this group includes a very small percentage of single parents who are step-parents or guardians.

Figure 1.3--Percentage distribution of 1988 eighth graders in single-parent families, by the highest level of educational attainment of the parent



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

As shown in table 1.1, both parents were employed in a majority (67 percent) of two-parent families. In about one-fourth of two-parent families (26 percent) only the father was employed, and in about 3 percent of these families, neither parent was employed. Single mothers tended to be employed at a lower rate than single fathers (74 percent and 90 percent, respectively).

Families and School Type

A large majority of 1988 eighth graders (88 percent) attended public schools. Catholic schools were second to public schools in enrollment (about 8 percent); while the remaining 5 percent attended other private schools (either other religious or private, nonreligious schools).[10] Eighth graders who attended public schools differed in many respects, with regard to their family life, from those who attended private schools. For example, eighth graders who attended public schools were less likely to live with both natural parents (63 percent) than those who attended Catholic schools (77 percent), other religious private schools (81 percent), or nonreligious private schools (81 percent) (figure 1.4). More public school eighth graders lived in families headed by a single mother (18 percent) than students in Catholic schools (13 percent), private, other religious schools (11 percent) or private, nonreligious schools (9 percent).

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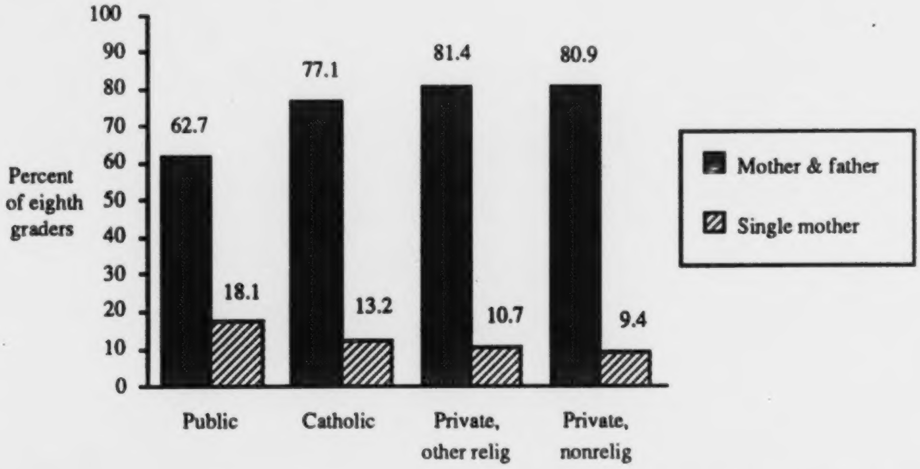
[10] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *A Profile of The American Eighth Grader*, 1990, (Washington D.C.).

Figure 1.4--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders who lived with either both natural parents or a single mother, by school type



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Overall, parents who sent their eighth grader to private schools were more likely to be college educated, have a higher income (more than $50,000 per year), and were older (39 to 48 years old) than parents whose children attended public schools (see table 1.1). For example, only 9 percent of single mothers whose eighth grader attended a public school graduated from college, compared with 23 percent, 42 percent, and 67 percent, respectively, of single mothers with children in Catholic schools; private, other religious schools; and private, nonreligious schools. A majority of parents (65 percent) whose eighth graders attended private, nonreligious schools had annual incomes of $50,000 or more, compared with only about 20 percent of the parents of public school eighth graders.

Chapter 2

How Parents Participate

In order to determine how parents participated in their eighth grader's education, they were asked a number of questions in the NELS:88 survey regarding such involvement. For example, parents were asked how often they discussed topics such as current school experiences, high school plans, and their child's educational aspirations after high school. They were also asked whether or not and how they restricted television watching, whether or not they set rules about maintaining certain grades, and how much they help their eighth grader with homework. In addition to these questions, parents were asked about their involvement with their child's school, such as whether or not they were PTA members and the frequency with which they attended such meetings. Parents were also asked about their specific beliefs regarding school standards and whether or not their child felt challenged and was working hard. Parent's responses varied among different groups. The following sections describe in detail the different ways in which parents reported participating in their eighth grader's education.

Limitations of Parental Involvement Measures

It is important to keep in mind that the groups of parents who were surveyed may have had different motivations for the kinds of participation measured in this survey. The direction of cause and effect (that is, whether parent's participation influences their child's performance or vice-versa) cannot be determined. Low involvement does not necessarily mean lack of interest in their child's education. Some parents may monitor their eighth grader's school-related activities less than they did previously because their child learned good study habits early and is doing well now. Consequently, the parents may not feel it necessary to take such an active role in their schooling. Other parents may indirectly influence their child's education by creating a stimulating learning environment that is not directly related to their formal schooling. Still other parents whose children are not performing well in school may take an active role in their eighth grader's education to intervene and prevent them from failing or even dropping out of school.

Cross-cultural differences may also be apparent when surveying parents of different racial–ethnic groups. For example, in this study it appeared that Asian parents were less involved than parents of other racial–ethnic groups. However, often among Asian cultures, parental expectations for their child's academic success are high, but their involvement may not be directly measurable in a survey such as NELS: 88. For example, in Japan, when children begin school, the role of the mother is extremely important to make sure their child is well prepared for school. They are expected to prepare elaborate lunches and make sure their children are equipped for every activity in the school day.[11] However, the presence of mothers in the school is actively discouraged since home and school life are considered quite separate and different.[12] All of these factors may be operating in this study, therefore it is important to consider them when interpreting the results of this anlysis.

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[11] L. Peak, *Learning to Go to School in Japan*, Berkeley: University of California Press (1991).

[12] Ibid.

Parent–Child Discussions about School-Related Topics

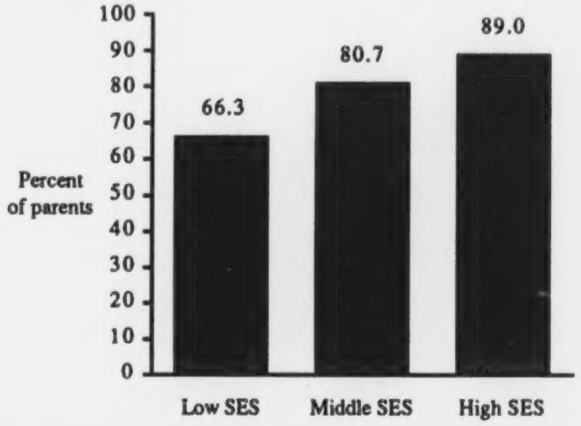
Parents were asked how often they discussed school-related topics including "experiences in school," "plans for high school," and "plans for after high school" with their eighth grader. Such discussions may help parents direct the educational paths of their children by providing useful information, guiding them in solving school-related problems, offering encouragement and/or disciplinary actions for specific behavior, and by stressing the importance of high school and postsecondary education. There were four possible responses to these questions: not at all, rarely, occasionally, or regularly.

School Experiences

The precise nature of the discussions about current school experiences cannot be determined by the survey questions. However, one can imagine these questions ranging from informal chats about the day's activities to more serious discussions about grades, behavior, or problems with classmates or teachers.

Most parents (79 percent) reported that they regularly discussed school experiences with their eighth grader. However, the proportion of parents reporting such discussions increased with socioeconomic status.[13] About 89 percent of high-SES parents reported regularly discussing school experiences, compared with 81 percent of middle-SES parents, and 66 percent of low-SES parents (figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who regularly discussed current school experiences with them, by SES



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

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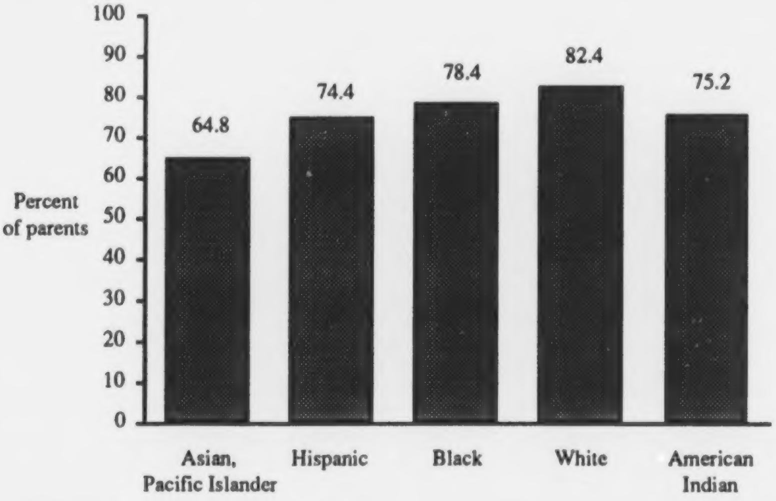
[13] Socioeconomic status is a composite measure of parents' education, occupations, and income (see appendix A for more detailed description).

Parents from different racial–ethnic groups reported regularly discussing school experiences with their eighth grader at different rates.[14] For all levels of socioeconomic status, parents of Asian children were less likely than parents of other racial–ethnic groups to report such discussions. For example, 65 percent of middle-SES parents of Asian children regularly discussed school experiences, compared with 78 percent of middle-SES parents of black children and 82 percent of middle-SES parents of white children (figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who regularly discussed current school experiences, by race–ethnicity among middle-SES parents[15]



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

When SES was taken into consideration, there were few differences between single-mother and two-parent families concerning discussions about current school experiences.[16] About 67 percent of both low-SES single-mother families and low-SES two-parent families reported regularly discussing school experiences. Similarly, 79 percent and 83 percent of middle-SES single-mother and two-parent families, respectively, regularly discussed school experiences.

However, among middle-SES families, two-parent families and single-mother families were more likely than single father families to report regular discussions about school experiences.[17] Approximately 83 percent of two-parent families and 79 percent of single mothers reported such discussions, compared with 68 percent of single fathers (figure 2.3).

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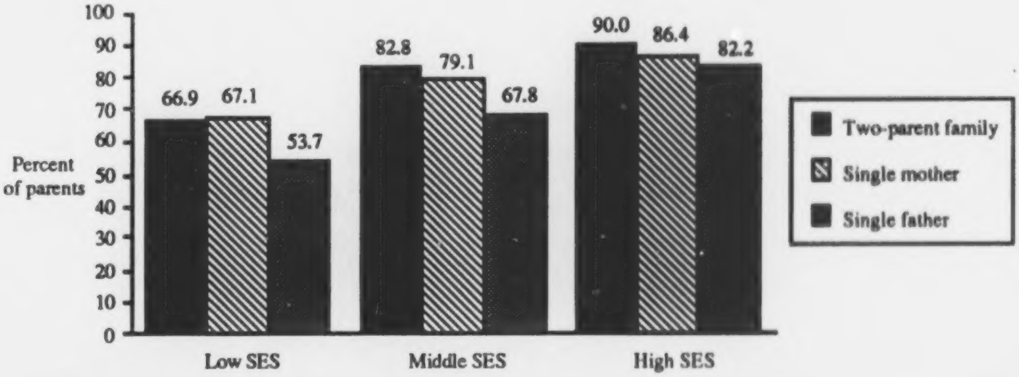
[14] The sample of Native American students in NELS:88 is very small and those students from Bureau of Indian Affairs schools were not included. Therefore, even when differences between Native Americans and other racial-ethnic groups appear large, they are rarely statistically significant. All differences discussed here are among black, Hispanic, Asian, and white students.

[15] See table 2.2 for percentages of low- and high-SES levels.

[16] Comparisons made here are between single mothers and two-parent families where both parents are the natural parents of the child (about 80 percent of all two-parent families).

Figure 2.3--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who regularly discussed current school experiences, by family composition and SES



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

In both single-parent and two-parent families, parents with higher educational attainment tended to report regularly discussing school experiences more than did those parents with lower attainment. Among single parents, 61 percent of single mothers and 49 percent of single fathers who did not graduate from high school reported regular discussions, compared with 84 percent of single mothers and 81 percent of single fathers who graduated from college (table 2.1). Similarly, 60 percent of two-parent families where neither parent graduated from high school reported such discussions, compared with 90 percent of two-parent families where both parents graduated from college. Such differences were also found between parents with less than a high school education and those who graduated from high school.[18]

Future Education Plans

Whether or not parents regularly discuss future education plans with their eighth grader may have a different meaning for different parents. For example, well educated parents with the resources to send their eighth grader on to higher education may take it for granted that their child will complete high school and attend college. Therefore, regular discussions about future education may not occur at such an early age. Less advantaged parents, on the other hand, may not be so assured about their child's future education and, thus, may feel the need to discuss it on a more regular basis.

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[17] While there appears to be large differences between low-SES single fathers and single mothers or two-parent families, the sample is too small to find statistical significance.

[18] The exception was for single fathers, whose sample size was too small to find significance.

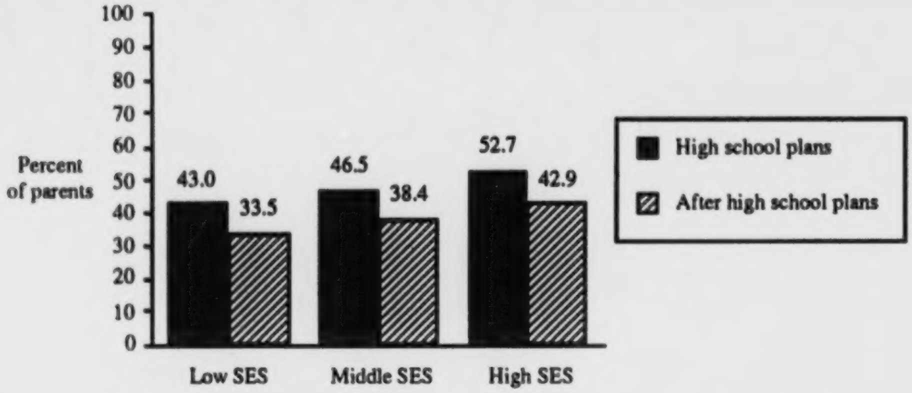
Table 2.1--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who regularly discussed current school experiences, by education and employment status

	Percent of parents who talk with child regularly about current school experiences
Total	79.4
Education level of parents	
Two-parent, no HS diploma	60.0
Two-parent, one HS diploma	72.9
Two-parent, both HS diploma	81.9
Two-parent, one college graduate	87.2
Two-parent, both college graduates	89.5
Single mother, no HS diploma	61.0
Single mother, HS diploma	77.0
Single mother, college graduate	84.2
Single father, no HS diploma	49.0
Single father, HS diploma	66.7
Single father, college graduate	81.0
Employment status of parents	
Two-parent, both employed	81.9
Two-parent, father employed	81.7
Two-parent, mother employed	73.5
Two-parent, neither employed	67.8
Single mother, employed	76.8
Single mother, not employed	69.2
Single father, employed	69.4
Single father, not employed	58.0

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Slightly less than one-half (47 percent) of the parents surveyed reported regularly discussing high school plans with their eighth grader, and a little more than one-third (38 percent) reported regularly discussing postsecondary education plans (see table 2.2). The percentage of parents who reported regularly discussing future education plans increased with SES, although the differences were not as great as those seen for discussions about school experiences (figure 2.4). Approximately 43 percent of low-SES parents reported regularly discussing high school plans, compared with 53 percent of high-SES parents. Likewise, 34 percent of low-SES parents reported regularly discussing postsecondary education plans, compared with 43 percent of high-SES parents.

Figure 2.4--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who regularly discussed future education plans, by SES



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Single mothers who headed low-SES families were somewhat more likely than low-SES two-parent families (where both are the natural parents) to report regularly discussing high school education plans (table 2.2): 47 percent of low-SES single mothers, compared with 41 percent of low-SES two-parent families discussed high school education plans. Across all levels of SES, parents of black children and parents of Hispanic children were more likely to report regularly discussing future education plans than parents of white children. For example, among low-SES parents, 53 percent of the parents of black children reported regularly discussing high school plans, compared with 37 percent of the parents of white children who reported the same. Similarly, among high-SES parents 64 percent of Hispanic parents reported regularly discussing high school plans, compared with 51 of white parents who reported the same. The same pattern was apparent for discussions concerning education plans after high school.

Parents who were college graduates reported regularly discussing postsecondary education plans more than parents with less than a high school education (table 2.3).[19] Among two-parent families, 30 percent of those where neither parent graduated from high school reported discussing postsecondary education plans, compared with 41 percent where both parents graduated from college. Among single-mother families, 35 percent who did not graduate from high school regularly discussed postsecondary education plans compared with 45 percent who graduated from college. Among two-parent families, similar differences were found between less-than-high-school educated and college educated parents regarding discussions about high school plans.

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[19] Difference for single fathers is not statistically significant.

Table 2.2--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who regularly discussed future education plans, by family composition and student's race–ethnicity, by SES

	Percent of parents who talk with child regularly about:		
	School experiences	High school plans	Education plans after high school
Total	79.4	47.2	38.3
Family composition, by SES			
Low SES			
Mother and father	66.9	41.0	32.0
Other two-parent	66.6	43.4	32.1
Single mother	67.1	46.8	36.7
Single father	53.7	37.4	28.7
Middle SES			
Mother and father	82.8	46.8	37.7
Other two-parent	76.7	45.3	37.5
Single mother	79.1	48.4	43.4
Single father	67.8	33.4	32.1
High SES			
Mother and father	90.0	53.7	42.4
Other two-parent	86.0	47.4	43.3
Single mother	86.4	53.0	47.1
Single father	82.2	44.3	40.0
Student race–ethnicity, by SES			
Low SES			
Asian-Pacific Islander	45.3	34.0	29.9
Hispanic	60.0	47.1	38.8
Black	68.2	53.0	44.8
White	68.8	37.4	26.1
American Indian	62.7	49.2	46.3
Middle SES			
Asian-Pacific Islander	64.8	39.7	37.1
Hispanic	74.4	54.8	45.9
Black	78.4	58.9	53.8
White	82.4	43.9	35.1
American Indian	75.2	47.2	44.9
High SES			
Asian-Pacific Islander	75.6	48.5	39.8
Hispanic	85.1	64.2	57.7
Black	90.4	71.3	65.4
White	90.0	51.3	41.0
American Indian	—	—	—

— Sample too small (less than 30) for reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Table 2.3--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who regularly discussed future education plans, by education and employment status

	Percent of parents who talk with child regularly about:	
	High school plans	Education plans after high school
Total	47.2	38.3
Education level of parents		
Two-parent, no HS diploma	40.7	29.6
Two-parent, one HS diploma	45.7	34.8
Two-parent, both HS diploma	46.0	37.7
Two-parent, one college graduate	51.8	42.4
Two-parent, both college graduates	52.3	40.8
Single mother, no HS diploma	47.1	34.6
Single mother, HS diploma	48.1	42.2
Single mother, college graduate	51.8	44.8
Single father, no HS diploma	36.8	26.1
Single father, HS diploma	33.2	31.7
Single father, college graduate	45.8	40.3
Employment status of parents		
Two-parent, both employed	47.8	38.8
Two-parent, father employed	47.1	36.6
Two-parent, mother employed	46.5	36.0
Two-parent, neither employed	42.3	34.5
Single mother, employed	48.7	41.4
Single mother, not employed	47.2	39.8
Single father, employed	36.2	32.9
Single father, not employed	42.0	35.9

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Family Rules

In order to encourage and help their children develop good study habits, parents may set explicit or implicit rules in the home regarding such activities as homework and television viewing. By creating an environment that promotes learning and educational pursuits, parents can, therefore, teach their children much about the benefits and importance of a good education.

Parents were asked a number of questions regarding home rules related to school work and general discipline. For example, they were asked whether or not they enforce rules about doing homework, how they monitor television viewing, and whether or not they require their child to maintain a certain grade-point average (GPA).

The overwhelming majority of parents (92 percent) reported that they set rules about doing homework. Since nearly all parents reported such rules, there was little variation among parents with different characteristics. However, parents did differ in regard to television monitoring and requiring a minimum GPA .

Television Viewing

There were several ways in which parents were asked about how they limited their eighth grader's television viewing: they were asked whether or not they limited the number of hours their child watched on a school night, whether or not they limited early- or late-hour watching, and whether or not they monitored the kinds of shows watched.

A majority of parents reported monitoring each of these three aspects of television watching: 62 percent reported limiting the number of hours watched, 69 percent monitored the kinds of shows watched, and 84 percent limited early- and late-hour watching by their eighth grader (table 2.4).

Monitoring the kinds of programs watched and restricting early and late viewing was more prevalent for middle- and high-SES families than for low-SES families (figure 2.5). About 60 percent of low-SES parents reported monitoring the kinds of shows watched, compared with 71 percent of middle-SES parents and 73 percent of high-SES parents. Similarly, 78 percent of low-SES parents limited early/late viewing, compared with about 86 percent of both middle- and high-SES parents. No differences were apparent, however, between middle- and high-SES parents for these activities.Whether or not parents limited the number of hours of TV watching, on the other hand, exhibited a different pattern where low-SES parents were a little more likely to limit the number of hours watched (64 percent) than middle-SES parents (61 percent). No differences between either low- and high-SES or between middle- and high-SES parents, however, were found.

Table 2.4--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported restricting television viewing, by education and employment status

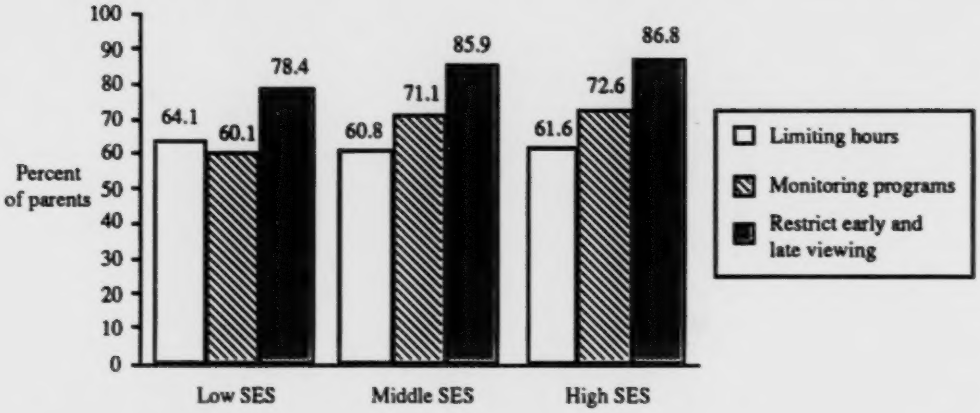
	Percent of parents regulating TV watching by:		
	Limiting hours watched on school nights	Monitoring kinds of programs	Restricting early/late watching
Total	61.7	68.9	84.4
Education level of parents			
Two-parent, no HS diploma	64.0	59.5	76.1
Two-parent, one HS diploma	61.6	64.6	83.0
Two-parent, both HS diploma	61.3	73.3	87.0
Two-parent, one college graduate	61.1	73.4	87.4
Two-parent, both college graduates	63.0	72.5	87.2
Single mother, no HS diploma	64.3	49.2	70.4
Single mother, HS diploma	62.5	64.5	82.2
Single mother, college graduate	60.1	69.0	80.3
Single father, no HS diploma	43.2	34.2	48.3
Single father, HS diploma	61.8	56.5	81.1
Single father, college graduate	57.2	56.9	80.1
Employment status of parents			
Two-parent, both employed	60.6	70.5	85.7
Two-parent, father employed	64.0	74.4	86.7
Two-parent, mother employed	61.1	65.6	83.0
Two-parent, neither employed	66.2	62.9	82.0
Single mother, employed	60.8	63.0	80.6
Single mother, not employed	67.3	60.4	77.9
Single father, employed	61.0	55.3	77.6
Single father, not employed	38.2	44.2	73.5

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

A similar relationship was found between parents' education level and how they monitored their child's television watching. That is, parents who were high school dropouts were less likely to monitor kinds of TV viewing than high school graduates, but high school graduates were just as likely as college graduates to do so (table 2.4). This was true for both two-parent and single-mother families.

Parents' employment status was also related to whether or not television viewing was monitored though to a lesser extent than SES. Parents in two-parent families where only the father was employed were more likely to report monitoring the kinds of television shows watched (74 percent) than those in two-parent families where only the mother was employed or where both parents were unemployed (66 percent and 63 percent, respectively). Unemployed single mothers were more likely to report limiting the number of hours their eighth grader watched television (67 percent) than employed single mothers (61 percent).

Figure 2.5--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported restricting television viewing, by SES



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

When SES was taken into consideration (table 2.5), lower- and middle-SES parents of black children were more likely to report that they limited the number of hours of television viewing than did their white counterparts (low SES: 72 percent versus 60 percent; middle SES: 76 percent vs 58 percent). Middle-SES parents of Hispanic children were also more likely than middle-SES parents of white children to report limiting the hours of television watched: 68 percent of parents of Hispanic children reported limiting the number of hours television was watched, compared with only 58 percent of parents of white children. However, this pattern was not found for program monitoring. Parents of black children were almost equally as likely as those of white children to report monitoring the types of shows their eighth grader watched (74 and 71 percent, respectively, of middle-SES parents).

Table 2.5--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported restricting television viewing, by students' race–ethnicity and SES

	Percent of parents regulating TV watching by:		
	Limiting hours watched on school nights	Monitoring kinds of programs	Restricting early/late watching
Total	61.7	68.9	84.4
Student race–ethnicity			
Asian-Pacific Islander	64.7	64.6	78.7
Hispanic	67.9	62.4	79.0
Black	74.8	70.1	84.6
White	58.5	69.8	85.3
American Indian	67.7	58.2	80.9
Race–ethnicity, by SES			
Low SES			
Asian-Pacific Islander	61.6	54.4	71.5
Hispanic	66.6	55.6	72.6
Black	72.3	63.6	80.6
White	59.9	61.0	80.1
American Indian	58.5	32.4	60.8
Middle SES			
Asian-Pacific Islander	62.0	66.0	77.3
Hispanic	68.1	67.6	84.0
Black	76.2	73.9	87.1
White	57.5	71.2	86.2
American Indian	69.8	69.8	91.5
High SES			
Asian-Pacific Islander	69.2	67.7	83.7
Hispanic	73.1	71.9	87.5
Black	79.7	80.8	89.8
White	59.4	72.5	86.8
American Indian	—	—	—

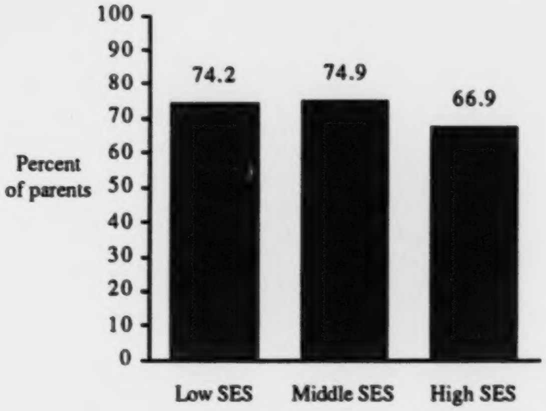
— Sample too small (less than 30) for reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Maintaining a Minimum Grade-Point Average

Approximately two-thirds (73 percent) of all parents surveyed indicated that they set rules requiring their eighth grader to maintain a minimum grade-point average (GPA). Low- and middle-SES parents were equally likely to require their child to maintain a certain GPA (about 75 percent), and both these groups were more likely to report doing so than high-SES (67 percent) parents (figure 2.6).

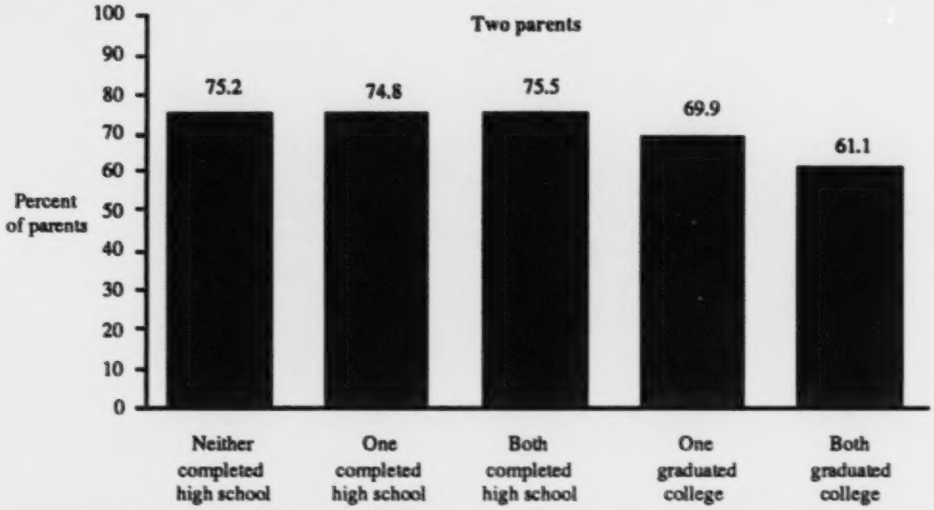
Figure 2.6--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported setting rules about maintaining a minimum grade-point average, by SES



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

In both two-parent and single-mother families, parents who were college graduates were less likely to set rules requiring a minimum GPA than those who had a high school education or less (figures 2.7 and 2.8). For example, 76 percent of two-parent families in which both parents were high school graduates reported that they required a minimum GPA, compared with only 61 percent of families in which both parents were college graduates.

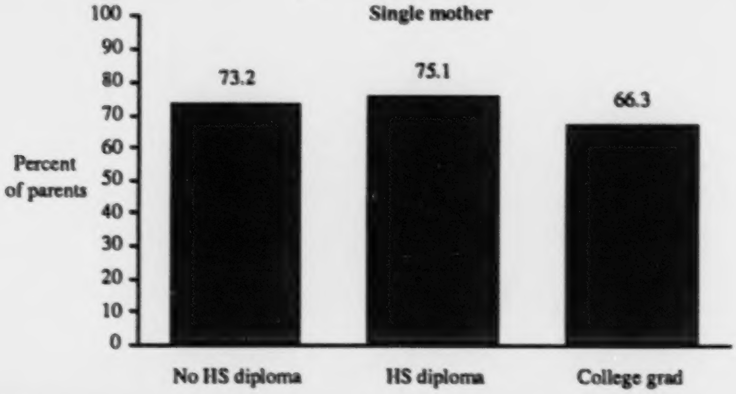
Figure 2.7--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported setting rules about maintaining a minimum grade-point average, by highest level of education among two-parent families



NOTE: Highest level of education can refer to either parent. When only one has graduated from high school or college it means the other has a lower attainment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Figure 2.8--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported setting rules about maintaining a minimum grade-point average, by highest level of education among single-mothers



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Across all levels of socioeconomic status, parents of black children were more likely to set rules requiring their eighth grader to maintain a minimum GPA than parents of white children. For example, 84 percent of middle-SES parents of black children required a minimum GPA, compared with 73 percent of parents of white children (table 2.6).

Table 2.6--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported setting rules about maintaining a minimum grade-point average, by students' race–ethnicity and SES

	Percent of parents setting rules regarding maintaining GPA
Total	72.7
Student race–ethnicity	
Asian-Pacific Islander	74.8
Hispanic	78.5
Black	82.3
White	70.2
American Indian	74.2
Race–ethnicity, by SES	
Low SES	
Asian-Pacific Islander	74.7
Hispanic	74.4
Black	80.3
White	71.5
American Indian	70.1
Middle SES	
Asian-Pacific Islander	77.0
Hispanic	83.3
Black	84.4
White	72.6
American Indian	78.1
High SES	
Asian-Pacific Islander	72.3
Hispanic	77.2
Black	81.5
White	65.2
American Indian	—

— Sample too small (less than 30) for reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

How Often Parents Help with Homework

Another way in which parents may show support for their child's efforts in school is by helping with their homework. Not only can they provide help in subject areas in which their child is having difficulty, they are showing that they value their child's work. It is important to remember, however, that not all children require help with their homework in the eighth grade. Children who established good study habits when they were younger and who may have had significant help from their parents at an early age, may require minimal help by the time they reach the eighth grade. Moreover, not all parents are capable of helping with their eighth grader's homework. Those parents who have difficulty with the English language or who are not highly educated themselves may not be able to offer help with their child's homework at the eighth-grade level. These parents may, however, provide indirect support such as encouraging their child to do homework and providing a good environment in which to do so. Finally, not all parents may think it is appropriate to help with their eighth graders homework. These parents may feel that by the eighth grade, their child should be completing homework assignments on his or her own. Thus, they may help with homework only if directly asked by a child who is having difficulty with a specific assignment.

Nearly one-third (29 percent) of all parents surveyed in NELS:88 reported that they never or only seldom helped their eighth grader with homework (table 2.7).[20] A similar proportion of parents reported that they helped once or twice a month (28 percent), while 32 percent said that they helped with their eighth grader's homework once or twice a week. Only 11 percent indicated that they helped almost every day.

The percentage of parents reporting never or seldom helping with their eighth grader's homework declined as their level of education increased.[21] In both two-parent and single-mother families, those who had not completed high school were nearly twice as likely to report seldom or never helping with their eighth grader's homework than parents who were college graduates (48 percent of two-parent families where neither parent completed high school compared with 21 percent in families where both parents were college graduates; and 50 percent of single mothers who did not complete high school compared with 28 percent who graduated from college). Even parents in two-parent families where only one parent had completed high school were more likely to help with homework than parents in families where neither had completed high school.

As the socioeconomic status of the parents increased, the percentage of parents who never or seldom helped with homework declined, especially between low and middle levels. About 42 percent of low-SES parents reported rarely or never helping with their eighth grader's homework, compared with only 28 percent of middle-SES parents and 22 percent of high-SES parents.

The employment status of parents was also related to whether or not they reported seldom or never helping with their eighth grader's homework. Among two-parent families, those in which neither parent was employed were more likely to report seldom or never helping with homework (41 percent) than families where only the father was employed (28 percent), only the mother was employed (31 percent), or when both parents were employed (26 percent). Unemployed single mothers were also more likely to report seldom or never helping with homework (40 percent) than employed single mothers (35 percent). The difference between employed and unemployed single fathers was not statistically significant.

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[20] It should be noted that the respondent parent was asked "How often do you or your spouse/partner help your eighth grader with his or her homework?" They were not given the option of reporting that their eighth grader had no homework.

[21] In two-parent families, there was no difference between those cases where both parents graduated from college or those where only one parent graduated from college.

Table 2.7--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who offered various levels of help with homework, by SES, education, and employment status

		Percent of parents who help with homework:			
		Seldom/ never	1 or 2 times/month	1 or 2 times/week	Almost every day
			(percent)		
Total	100	29.4	27.7	32.1	10.7
Socioeconomic status					
Lower 25%	100	41.7	21.8	25.7	10.9
Middle 50%	100	27.5	28.4	33.6	10.5
High 25%	100	21.9	32.0	35.3	10.8
Education level of parents					
Two-parent, no HS diploma	100	47.6	20.0	23.5	9.0
Two-parent, one HS diploma	100	33.7	26.0	29.6	10.7
Two-parent, both HS diploma	100	26.6	29.2	33.7	10.5
Two-parent, one college graduate	100	21.8	30.2	36.1	11.9
Two-parent, both college graduates	100	20.5	31.9	36.1	11.4
Single mother, no HS diploma	100	50.3	18.1	21.8	9.7
Single mother, HS diploma	100	33.8	26.0	29.7	10.5
Single mother, college graduate	100	28.4	28.7	33.1	9.9
Single father, no HS diploma	100	59.4	16.1	14.9	9.6
Single father, HS diploma	100	32.8	27.0	31.4	8.8
Single father, college graduate	100	31.1	25.5	32.3	11.1
Employment status of parents					
Two-parent, both employed	100	26.4	29.1	33.9	10.7
Two-parent, father employed	100	28.1	28.8	32.2	10.9
Two-parent, mother employed	100	31.0	27.3	32.1	9.6
Two-parent, neither employed	100	41.3	20.6	27.2	10.9
Single mother, employed	100	35.0	26.1	29.3	9.7
Single mother, not employed	100	40.0	21.4	26.6	12.1
Single father, employed	100	34.7	25.3	30.6	9.5
Single father, not employed	100	39.9	27.4	23.7	9.0

NOTE: Because of rounding rows may not add to 100 percent.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

In both low- and middle-SES families, parents of Asian children and parents of Hispanic children were more likely to report never or seldom helping with their eighth grader's homework than parents of either black children or white children (table 2.8). The differences among these groups, however, were not statistically significant for high-SES parents.

For those parents who reported helping their eighth grader "almost every day," low-SES parents of black children were more likely to report doing so than parents of children in all other racial–ethnic groups.[22] Among middle-SES parents, parents of black children were more likely to report helping every day than parents of either white or Hispanic children.

Table 2.8--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who offered various levels of help with homework, by students' race–ethnicity and race–ethnicity by SES

	Percent of parents who help with homework:			
	Seldom/ never	1 or 2 times/month	1 or 2 times/week	Almost every day
Total	29.4	27.7	32.1	10.7
Student race–ethnicity				
Asian-Pacific Islander	37.9	23.3	29.2	9.6
Hispanic	41.1	21.6	28.1	9.3
Black	32.1	20.6	30.1	17.3
White	27.0	30.1	33.2	9.7
American Indian	40.0	22.3	26.4	11.3
Race–ethnicity, by SES				
Low SES				
Asian-Pacific Islander	57.1	15.1	21.4	6.3
Hispanic	53.2	17.9	21.4	7.5
Black	40.0	18.2	25.7	16.2
White	37.2	25.2	27.6	10.1
American Indian	57.1	24.3	13.3	5.3
Middle SES				
Asian-Pacific Islander	38.0	21.6	28.9	11.5
Hispanic	31.0	25.0	33.6	10.4
Black	27.3	22.0	33.3	17.4
White	26.8	30.0	33.9	9.4
American Indian	32.4	22.1	32.8	12.7
High SES				
Asian-Pacific Islander	28.6	29.2	33.2	8.9
Hispanic	25.7	24.6	37.1	12.6
Black	20.1	24.6	34.1	21.2
White	21.4	33.1	35.4	10.1
American Indian	—	—	—	—

— Sample too small for reliable estimate.
NOTE: Because of rounding rows may not add to 100 percent.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

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[22] The same appears true for high-SES parents, but the sample for black parents is too small to find statistical significance.

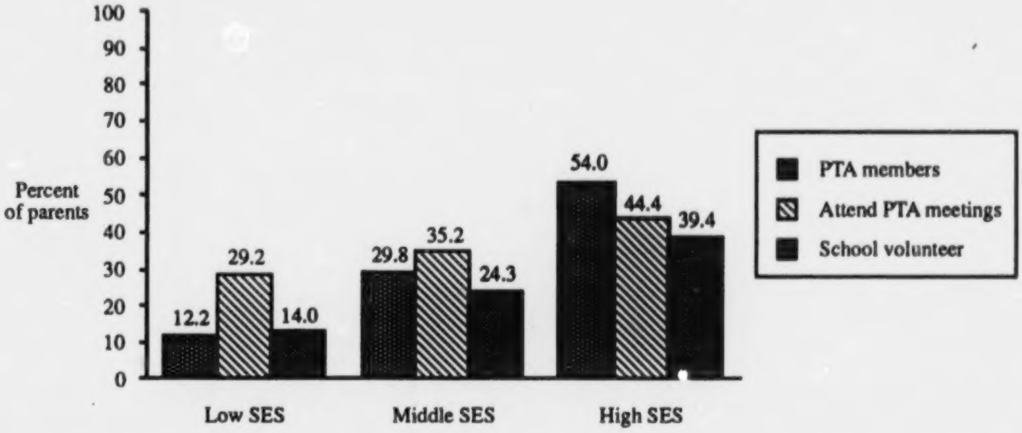
PTA Participation and School Volunteerism

The PTA has long served as a means of communication between parents and the school administration. Through this forum parents have been able to voice concerns about school policy and the quality of education that their child's school offers. Thus, involvement in the PTA may serve as an indication that parents are willing to actively participate in maintaining or changing the school environment. In this survey, parents were asked whether or not they were PTA members, attended PTA meetings, or were school volunteers.[23]

Approximately one-third (32 percent) of all parents surveyed reported being PTA members. A slightly higher proportion (36 percent) of all parents indicated that they attended PTA meetings, and approximately one-fifth (19 percent) of all parents reported that they had volunteered in the school (see table 2.9).

Membership rates in the PTA rose sharply with socioeconomic status. Only 12 percent of low-SES parents reported being members, compared with 30 percent of middle-SES parents, and more than one-half (54 percent) of high-SES parents (figure 2.9). Whether or not parents attended PTA meetings or volunteered in the school showed similar, though less marked, relationships with SES.

Figure 2.9--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who participated in PTA activities or volunteered in the school, by SES



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

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[23] Parents were also asked if they participated in PTA "activities." These results were very similar to those observed for attending PTA meetings, so they are not presented here.

Given the relationship between socioeconomic status and PTA membership, it was not surprising that parents' membership in the PTA increased with their education level (table 2.9).[24] Nearly twice as many single mothers who were college graduates (47 percent) belonged to the PTA as did single mothers who were high school graduates (25 percent); and more than four times as many who were college graduates belonged as those who did not complete high school (10 percent). Single fathers who were college graduates were also more likely to be PTA members than those with lower levels of education. Similar patterns were found for two-parent families. PTA meeting attendance and whether or not parents volunteered in the school were also related to parental education, though to a lesser extent than PTA membership.

Table 2.9--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who participated in PTA activities or volunteered in the school, by level of education

	Percent of parents		
	PTA member	Attend PTA meetings	School volunteer
Total	31.9	36.2	19.0
Education level of parents			
Two-parent, no HS diploma	10.6	32.7	8.9
Two-parent, one HS diploma	15.4	28.7	12.0
Two-parent, both HS diploma	30.8	35.8	19.7
Two-parent, one college graduate	48.7	42.7	28.5
Two-parent, both college graduates	60.7	47.0	30.8
Single mother, no HS diploma	9.7	25.1	8.2
Single mother, HS diploma	24.6	33.0	11.6
Single mother, college graduate	46.7	44.0	19.8
Single father, no HS diploma	0.0	17.9	2.7
Single father, HS diploma	13.6	21.3	11.1
Single father, college graduate	31.0	37.2	13.5

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Parents of black children reported being members of the PTA and attending PTA meetings in greater proportions than parents of white children in both middle and high levels of SES (figure 2.10). Among low-SES families, parents of white children were less likely to report attending PTA meetings (22 percent) than parents of Hispanic or Asian children (38 percent and 34 percent, respectively). On the other hand, middle-SES parents of white children were more likely to report volunteering in the school (19 percent) than parents of black or Asian children (14 percent and 12 percent, respectively).

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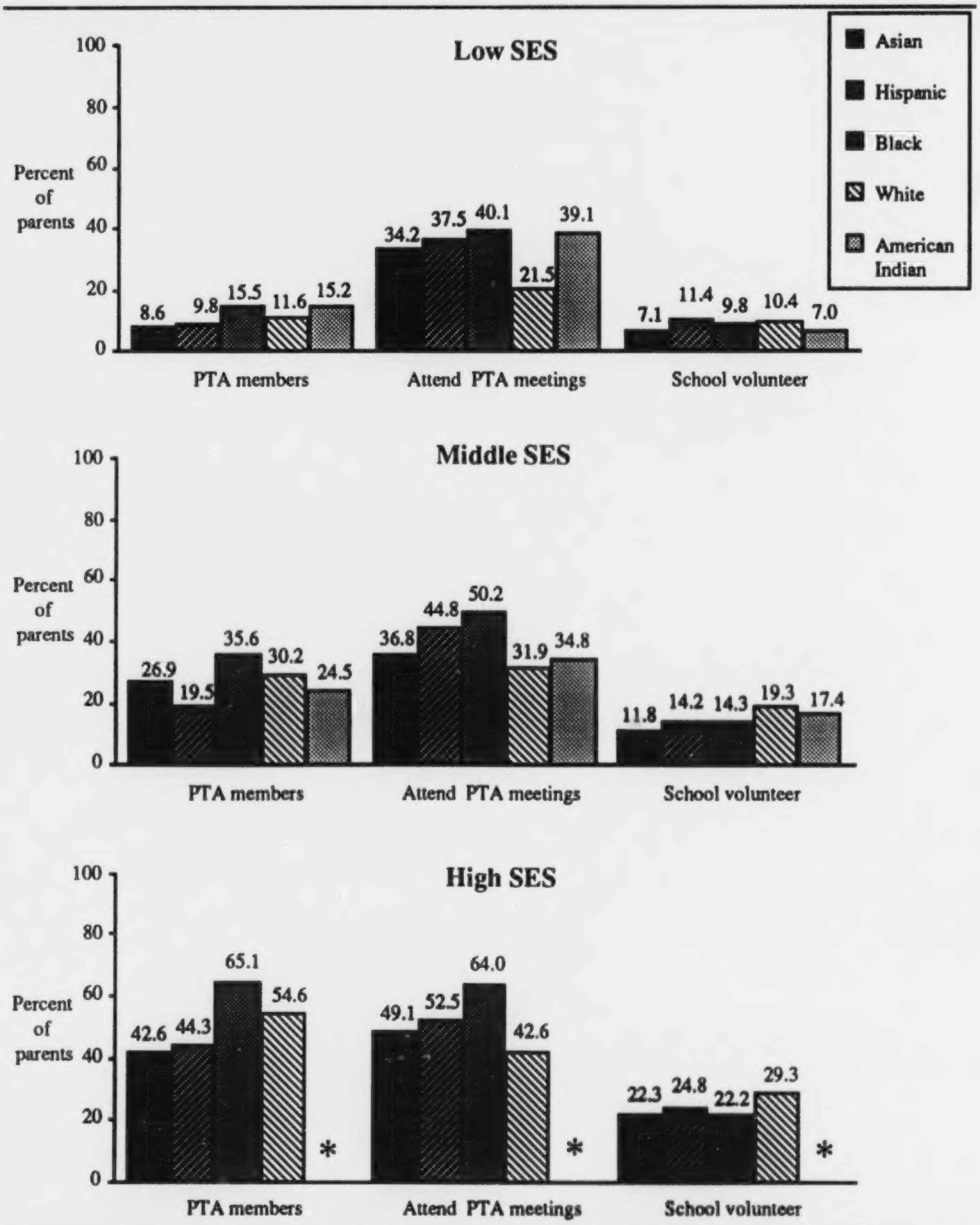
[24] One exception was in two-parent families, where the difference between neither or one parent graduating from high school is not statistically significant.

Figure 2.10--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who participated in PTA activities or volunteered in the school, by race–ethnicity and SES



* Sample of American Indians too small (less than 30) for a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Parent-Initiated Contact with Their Eighth Grader's School

Parents were asked how frequently they contacted the school regarding their eighth grader's academic performance or program. Contact with the school, however, is an interactive process and whether or not the parents were responding to contact initiated by the school or initiating their own contact cannot be distinguished. In the following presentation, any contact the parents reported making to the school is labeled parent-initiated contact.

Overall, about one-half (53 percent) of the parents surveyed indicated they had ever contacted the school about their child's academic performance, and a little more than one-third (35 percent) had contacted the school about their eighth grader's academic program (table 2.10). Whether or not parents had any contact with the school increased with SES and their level of education.[25] Among low-SES parents, 38 percent reported contacting the school regarding their child's academic performance, and 24 percent reported contacting the school about their child's academic program. In contrast, 62 percent and 44 percent, respectively, of high-SES parents reported contacting the school about their child's academic performance or program. Similarly, parents who were college graduates reported contacting the school in greater proportions than parents who either had not completed high school or who were high school graduates. For example, in two-parent families where both graduated from college, 62 percent contacted the school about their child's academic performance, compared with only 32 percent of two-parent families where neither parent completed high school.[26]

For middle-SES families, there was little difference between single-parent and two-parent families in relation to their contacting the school (table 2.11). However, a greater percentage of single mothers from either low-SES (43 percent) or high-SES families (69 percent) tended to contact the school about their child's academic performance than two-parent families with both natural parents (37 percent of low-SES and 61 percent of high-SES two-parent families contacted the school about their child's academic performance).

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[25] One exception to this was in two-parent families where the difference between one of both parents graduating from college was not statistically different.

[26] The differences for single fathers were not statistically significant.

Table 2.10--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported contacting the school about their child's academic performance or program, by SES and level of education

	Percent of parents who contact school about:	
	Academic performance	Academic program
Total	52.5	34.9
Socioeconomic status		
Lower 25%	38.1	24.2
Middle 50%	54.1	34.8
High 25%	61.9	44.1
Education level of parents		
Two-parent, no HS diploma	32.3	21.2
Two-parent, one HS diploma	42.8	28.6
Two-parent, both HS diploma	53.6	35.1
Two-parent, one college graduate	60.9	41.1
Two-parent, both college graduates	61.5	46.4
Single mother, no HS diploma	33.9	19.0
Single mother, HS diploma	53.5	32.7
Single mother, college graduate	67.8	45.6
Single father, no HS diploma	24.5	10.6
Single father, HS diploma	54.5	28.5
Single father, college graduate	61.1	40.2

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Table 2.11--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported contacting the school about their child's academic performance or program, by family composition and SES

	Percent of parents who contact school about:	
	Academic performance	Academic program
Total	52.5	34.9
Family composition		
Low SES		
Mother and father	37.3	23.9
Other two-parent	34.9	23.5
Single mother	43.2	26.4
Single father	35.3	17.6
Middle SES		
Mother and father	53.8	34.9
Other two-parent	55.4	36.2
Single mother	54.9	33.5
Single father	55.4	29.3
High SES		
Mother and father	61.1	44.1
Other two-parent	62.2	45.2
Single mother	68.7	43.5
Single father	61.7	40.5

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

In examining racial–ethnic group differences regarding parent-initiated contact, parents of Asian children were generally less likely to report contacting the school than parents of other racial–ethnic groups.[27] Among middle-SES families, for example, about 41 percent reported contacting the school about their eighth grader's academic performance, compared with approximately 55 percent of parents from other racial–ethnic groups (table 2.12). A similar pattern was found concerning contact about academic programs.

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[27] The exception is among low-SES parents, where parents of Asian children were not statistically different from other parents in regard to whether or not they contacted the school about their child's academic program.

Table 2.12--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported contacting the school about their child's academic performance or program, by student's race–ethnicity and race–ethnicity by SES

	Percent of parents who contact school about:	
	Academic performance	Academic program
Total	52.5	34.9
Student race–ethnicity		
Asian-Pacific Islander	41.7	30.7
Hispanic	50.5	35.5
Black	51.5	34.2
White	53.4	35.0
American Indian	54.5	36.1
Race–ethnicity, by SES		
Low SES		
Asian-Pacific Islander	28.6	23.6
Hispanic	40.4	27.7
Black	40.9	26.3
White	36.7	22.0
American Indian	38.6	31.0
Middle SES		
Asian-Pacific Islander	41.3	25.1
Hispanic	55.8	39.6
Black	56.3	37.1
White	54.0	34.4
American Indian	61.1	37.7
High SES		
Asian-Pacific Islander	48.0	40.2
Hispanic	73.0	52.7
Black	71.0	51.9
White	61.6	43.4
American Indian	—	—

— Sample too small for reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Parents' and Children's Views on the Level of Parental Involvement

NELS:88 eighth graders were also asked about the level of their parents' participation in their schooling. Even though these questions were not worded in exactly the same way, it is possible to estimate the relative agreement or disagreement between the eighth graders and their parents.[28] Table 2.13 illustrates these comparisons. Overall, given the difference in the way the questions were asked and the possible responses, there was relative agreement between parents and students, with the possible exception of television restrictions and discussions about school activities.

Parents were asked about the several kinds of television restrictions they enforced, including program monitoring, the number of hours watched on a given school night, and early/late viewing. The only possible responses were "yes" or "no." On the other hand, students were asked only one question—whether or not their parents limited television viewing—and were given four possible responses, ranging from "never" to "often." As shown in table 2.13, more than one-third of the students (37 percent) indicated that their parents never restricted their television viewing, whereas 84 percent of the parents indicated they restricted early/late viewing. How much of the discrepancy was due to actual differences and how much was due to the interpretation of the questions is difficult to determine.

Similarly, less than 60 percent of the students reported having three or more discussions about school activities during the school year with their parents, compared with almost 80 percent of the parents who said they regularly discussed school experiences with their eighth grader. Again, how a parent interprets "school experience" or a student interprets "school activities" is hard to ascertain. For instance, every day after school, a parent may ask their child how their day went. Even if the child responds, "fine," this may be viewed as regularly discussing "school experiences," whereas a student may view a discussion about school activities as more formal or involved.

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[28] See U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Quality of Responses in the NELS:88 Data*, 1991, (Washington D.C.), for a detailed discussion of student–parent comparisons.

Table 2.13--Comparison of NELS:88 parent and student responses to related questions regarding parental involvement: percent of parents or students

Parents		Students	
	(percent)		
Parent restrictions on TV viewing		*Parent limits TV viewing*	
Limit hours	61.7	Never	36.9
Monitor programs	47.2	Rarely	25.9
Restrict early/late viewing	84.4	Sometimes	23.1
		Often	14.2
Parent regularly discusses experiences	79.4	*Student discusses high school activities with parents three or more times during school year*	56.9
Parent regularly discusses high school plans	47.2	*Student discusses high school plans with mother three or more times during school year*	52.1
Parent helps with homework		*Parent checks on homework*	
Seldom/never	29.4	Never/rarely	25.8
Once or twice/month	27.1	Sometimes	29.5
Once or twice/week to almost every day	42.8	Often	44.5
Parent attends PTA meetings	34.9	*Parent attends school meetings*	49.5

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent and Student Survey."

After-School Supervision

According to NELS:88 parents, a majority of eighth graders had some sort of supervision after school.[29] More than three-quarters of parents (78 percent) reported that their eighth grader usually went home after school. About 13 percent participated in after-school programs or sports activities; 7 percent went to the home of a relative, friend, or neighbor; and 2 percent went elsewhere (table 2.14). A separate question was asked of the parents regarding who was "usually" present in the home when their eighth grader returned from school. Approximately 64 percent of the parents indicated a parent was home, while 10 percent indicated no one was at home.

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[29] The parents were asked, "Where does your eighth grader *usually* go after school?" No time reference is given so that it is not clear whether or not parents mean directly after school or sometime after school.

Eighth graders from low-socioeconomic families were more likely to go to the home of a neighbor, friend, or relative after school (11 percent) than those from high-socioeconomic families (4 percent). On the other hand, children from high-SES families were more likely to participate in after-school activities, including sports (19 percent), than those from low-SES backgrounds (8 percent).

A parent was "usually" at home when their eighth grader returned from school more often in low-SES families (73 percent) than in high-SES families (62 percent). Similarly, no one was at home more frequently in high-SES families (11 percent) than in low-SES families (7 percent).

Table 2.14--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders whose parents reported various after-school locations for their child and person present when their child returned home, by SES

		Where 8th grader went after school:				Who was at home:*			
		Neighbor sitter/ relative/ friend	After school program/ sports	Job/ other	Home	Parent	Other adult/ older sibling	Younger sibling	No one home
			(percent)				(percent)		
Total	100	7.1	13.1	2.1	77.7	63.7	33.5	37.5	10.1
Socioeconomic status									
Lower 25%	100	10.6	8.3	2.5	78.7	73.4	38.6	39.9	6.9
Middle 50%	100	7.1	12.4	2.0	78.5	60.6	33.8	37.2	10.9
High 25%	100	3.8	19.1	1.8	75.3	61.5	28.6	35.8	11.2

* Each column is independent (e.g., more than one person can be home).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: Base-Year Parent Survey."

Chapter 3

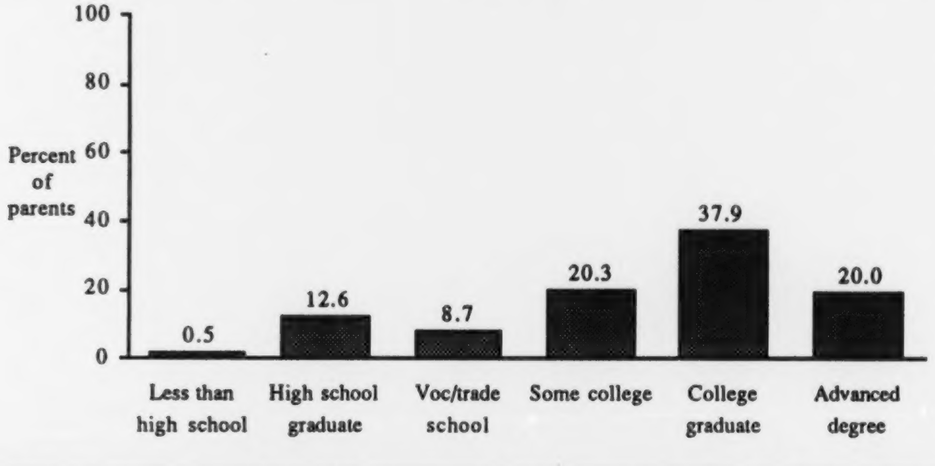
Parents' Expectations and Beliefs

In the NELS:88 survey, parents were asked how far they expected their eighth grader to go in school and about the adequacy of their child's current schooling. For example, they were asked how strongly they agreed with statements such as "the homework assigned is worthwhile," "my eighth grader is challenged at school," "my eighth grader enjoys school," and so on. This chapter examines these expectations and beliefs and suggests that, at this stage in their child's education, parents have relatively high expectations and are quite positive about the adequacy of their eighth grader's schooling. Overall, the higher the level of parents' education, the further they expected their eighth grader to go in school. Even among parents who had not graduated from high school, a majority expected their eighth grader to have at least some sort of postsecondary education.

Parents' Expectations about Their Eighth Grader's Future Education

A majority of parents expected their eighth grader to attend college (figure 3.1). More than one-third (38 percent) expected their child to graduate from college, while one in five expected their eighth grader to earn an advanced degree. Less than 1 percent of all parents expected their child to drop out of school before high school graduation, while 13 percent expected that a high school diploma would be their child's highest attainment. An additional 9 percent of parents expected their eighth grader to receive some kind of vocational training after high school.

Figure 3.1--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents expecting their eighth grader to attain various levels of education



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

As parents' levels of SES and education rose, so did their expectations for their child's educational attainment (table 3.1). More than twice as many parents from high-SES (53 percent) than low-SES families (20 percent) expected their eighth grader to earn a baccalaureate degree. Similarly, 45 percent of single mothers with college degrees expected their eighth grader to graduate from college, compared with 34 percent of single mothers with a high school diploma and 21 percent who did not graduate from high school. Two-parent families exhibited similar patterns.

Among two-parent families, parents who had not graduated from high school were more likely to expect the same of their eighth grader than parents who had attained a higher level of education. In cases where neither parent graduated from high school, 2 percent expected their eighth grader not to graduate, compared with 0.3 percent where both parents were high school graduates. A similar pattern was found between single mothers who had not graduated from high school (1.7 percent) and those who had graduated from college (0.2 percent).

Table 3.1--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents expecting their eighth grader to attain various levels of education, by SES and level of education

	Percent of parents who expect their eighth graders to attain:					
	Less than HS diploma	HS grad	Voc-trade school	Some college	College grad	Advanced degree
Total	0.5	12.6	8.7	20.3	37.9	20.0
Socioeconomic status						
Lower 25%	1.4	26.8	12.2	28.9	19.8	10.9
Middle 50%	0.4	11.0	9.9	23.2	39.1	16.4
High 25%	0.0	2.4	2.9	6.3	52.7	35.7
Education level of parents						
Two-parent, no HS diploma	2.0	31.5	8.7	30.4	17.8	9.7
Two-parent, one HS diploma	0.8	21.9	13.6	30.1	21.7	11.9
Two-parent, both HS diploma	0.3	11.4	10.9	23.8	38.6	15.1
Two-parent, one college graduate	0.1	4.1	4.3	6.9	56.3	28.4
Two-parent, both college graduates	0.0	1.0	1.5	2.6	50.4	44.4
Single mother, no HS diploma	1.7	32.9	8.5	24.6	20.5	11.8
Single mother, HS diploma	0.7	12.7	9.3	26.1	33.7	17.5
Single mother, college graduate	0.2	4.1	3.0	5.3	45.3	42.2
Single father, no HS diploma	0.0	23.5	7.9	29.3	34.3	5.0
Single father, HS diploma	0.7	18.2	9.0	18.2	39.0	15.0
Single father, college graduate	0.0	2.0	5.2	2.9	53.2	36.8

NOTE: Because of rounding rows may not add to 100 percent.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Across all levels of socioeconomic status, parents of Asian children expected their child to earn an advanced degree at higher rates than parents of white children (table 3.2). For example, 25 percent of low-SES parents of Asian children expected their eighth grader to earn an advanced degree, compared with only 7 percent of parents of white children. Among low- and middle-SES families, parents of other minority children also expected their eighth grader to earn an advanced degree more often than parents of white children, though to a lesser extent than Asians. Among middle-SES parents of Hispanic and black children, 26 percent and 27 percent, respectively, expected their eighth graders to earn an advanced degree, compared with 13 percent of their white counterparts. Similarly, among low-SES families 15 percent of parents of either Hispanic or black children expected an advanced degree, compared with 7 percent of white parents.

Past surveys indicate that about 10 percent of black and Hispanic high school seniors will earn, at the most, a bachelor's degree (compared with 27 percent and 20 percent, respectively, of Asian and white students).[30] Given these historical trends, it shows the great value that parents of minority children place on high educational attainment, and that at this point in their child's education, parents still have high expectations for their future attainment.

Parents' Beliefs about Their Eighth Grader's Schooling

Parents were asked to respond to a number of statements regarding their beliefs and attitudes about their eighth grader's school. Among these beliefs were whether or not the homework assigned was worthwhile, whether their child worked hard and enjoyed school, and how well parents worked together.

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[30] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *High School and Beyond, A Descriptive Summary of 1980 High School Seniors: Six Years Later*, 1988 (Washington, D.C.).

Table 3.2--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents expecting their eighth grader to attain various levels of education, by students' race–ethnicity and race–ethnicity by SES

	Percent of parents who expect their eighth graders to attain:					
	Less than HS diploma	HS grad	Voc-trade school	Some college	College grad	Advanced degree
Total	0.5	12.6	8.7	20.3	37.9	20.0
Student race–ethnicity						
Asian-Pacific Islander	0.1	7.5	3.6	11.9	35.1	41.8
Hispanic	0.9	15.9	8.1	25.9	26.6	22.7
Black	0.5	15.5	7.1	20.8	32.2	23.9
White	0.5	11.8	9.3	19.6	40.8	18.1
American Indian	1.5	16.2	7.2	27.4	26.3	21.4
Race–ethnicity, by SES						
Low SES						
Asian-Pacific Islander	0.2	15.6	5.4	23.6	30.5	24.7
Hispanic	1.5	24.8	9.3	29.9	19.9	14.6
Black	0.6	24.4	9.6	25.0	25.9	14.5
White	1.6	29.3	15.0	30.2	16.8	7.0
American Indian	3.1	18.6	6.0	38.0	17.1	17.2
Middle SES						
Asian-Pacific Islander	0.1	9.1	5.1	13.2	38.0	34.5
Hispanic	0.3	8.7	8.4	26.6	30.2	25.8
Black	0.4	9.7	6.0	19.9	37.4	26.6
White	0.3	11.4	10.9	23.6	40.5	13.2
American Indian	0.8	16.0	9.0	23.9	29.3	21.0
High SES						
Asian-Pacific Islander	0.0	1.7	1.1	4.7	33.9	58.7
Hispanic	0.0	3.4	1.4	5.3	43.1	46.7
Black	0.0	4.1	1.6	6.9	35.0	52.4
White	0.0	2.3	3.2	6.4	55.2	32.9
American Indian	—	—	—	—	—	—

— Sample too small (less than 30) for reliable estimate.
NOTE: Because of rounding rows may not add to 100 percent.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Almost all parents felt that the homework their eighth grader was assigned was worthwhile (91 percent) and a majority (78 percent) felt that their child was challenged in school (table 3.3). Most parents also felt that their child was working hard (74 percent) and enjoyed school (82 percent). With the exception of school enjoyment, these perceptions did not vary much by SES. However, high-SES parents (87 percent) were more likely than low-SES parents (78 percent) to report that their child enjoyed school.

Parents of white children (73 percent) were less likely than parents of Asian children (84 percent) to report that their child was working hard. Parents of white children were also less likely than others to state that their child enjoyed school. This was especially true among low-SES parents, where 86 percent, 84 percent, and 85 percent, respectively, of parents of Asian, Hispanic, and black children reported that their eighth grader enjoyed school, compared with only 72 percent of their white counterparts.

Table 3.3--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who strongly agreed or agreed with various statements regarding their eighth grader's schooling, by SES, students' race–ethnicity, and race–ethnicity by SES

	Homework worthwhile	Eighth grader is: Challenged	Eighth grader is: Working hard	Eighth grader is: Enjoying school
			(percent)	
Total	90.7	77.9	74.4	82.0
Socioeconomic status				
Lower 25%	91.3	77.4	76.7	78.3
Middle 50%	90.1	77.4	73.2	81.3
High 25%	91.5	79.5	74.6	86.7
Student race–ethnicity				
Asian-Pacific Islander	92.6	81.3	84.2	88.3
Hispanic	90.8	79.9	78.5	85.7
Black	93.8	77.9	76.0	86.5
White	90.2	77.6	73.2	80.5
American Indian	92.1	79.0	74.4	80.8
Race–ethnicity, by SES				
Low SES				
Asian-Pacific Islander	90.5	76.0	83.8	86.1
Hispanic	90.2	81.5	81.2	84.3
Black	95.5	78.9	77.1	85.3
White	89.8	75.2	73.9	72.3
American Indian	94.9	87.4	88.7	84.7
Middle SES				
Asian-Pacific Islander	90.7	80.8	82.3	86.7
Hispanic	91.3	78.7	76.0	86.3
Black	92.2	75.6	74.1	86.4
White	89.7	77.6	72.8	79.9
American Indian	90.9	74.6	69.5	78.8
High SES				
Asian-Pacific Islander	96.0	84.3	86.6	91.3
Hispanic	91.5	78.1	76.6	89.9
Black	94.0	84.5	80.1	92.5
White	91.1	79.0	73.7	86.1
American Indian	—	—	—	—

— Sample too small (less than 30) for reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Parents' Beliefs about Their Child's School

A majority of all parents surveyed (63 percent) believed they had an adequate say in school policies. An even greater percentage (74 percent) believed that parents worked well together for the school (table 3.4).

Whether or not the parents believed that they worked well together for the school increased modestly with SES. High-SES parents (78 percent) were more likely than either middle- or low-SES parents (72 percent and 74 percent, respectively) to believe that parents worked well together for the school. On the other hand, low-SES and high-SES parents were equally likely (65 percent) to report that they had an adequate say in school policy, and both these groups were more likely than middle-SES parents to report this belief (60 percent).

Parents of Asian children tended to believe that parents had an adequate say in policy more than parents of Hispanic, black, or white children. This pattern was true for both high- and middle-level SES, but not for low-SES families.

Table 3.4--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who strongly agreed or agreed with statements regarding their relationship with their eighth grader's school, by SES, students' race–ethnicity and race–ethnicity by SES

	Percent of parents who agree that parents:	
	Have say in policy	Work together for school
Total	62.6	74.2
Socioeconomic status		
Lower 25%	64.8	73.7
Middle 50%	60.4	72.3
High 25%	65.0	78.4
Student race–ethnicity		
Asian-Pacific Islander	75.6	80.8
Hispanic	70.0	75.0
Black	65.4	77.2
White	60.6	73.2
American Indian	66.6	74.6
Race–ethnicity, by SES		
Low SES		
Asian-Pacific Islander	75.5	80.7
Hispanic	74.2	77.2
Black	69.3	80.5
White	58.6	69.0
American Indian	74.3	80.8
Middle SES		
Asian-Pacific Islander	75.0	79.7
Hispanic	66.6	71.8
Black	62.2	72.3
White	59.0	72.0
American Indian	61.1	71.9
High SES		
Asian-Pacific Islander	76.3	82.2
Hispanic	64.4	77.0
Black	62.9	86.0
White	64.5	77.9
American Indian	—	—

— Sample too small (less than 30) for reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Chapter 4

School Type and Parental Involvement

Parents whose children attend different types of schools (i.e., those who attend public schools compared with those who attend private schools) may often have different levels of involvement with the school. This involvement may be influenced by several factors. For instance, it is often mandatory for parents to participate in school-related activities in private schools. Even schools within the public sector can differ markedly in their demands on parents. In addition, socioeconomic status is highly associated with whether or not an eighth grader attends a public or private school. Public schools generally serve higher proportions of low-SES and minority students.[31] Therefore, differences found among the types of schools may not only reflect schooling, but may substantially reflect differences in the students who attend the schools. Only about 5 percent of 1988 eighth graders attended other religious or nonreligious private schools (see chapter 1). The small number of these types of private school students included in the NELS:88 sample makes it difficult to analyze parental involvement measures by school type for each level of socioeconomic status. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind the influence of factors other than the schools themselves, notably SES, when examining differences in parental involvement among the various types of schools.

In order to examine the influence that different types of schools may have on parental involvement, three school attributes were identified: school type; school environment, and how often schools initiate contact with parents.[32] The NELS:88 survey identified four types of schools: public schools; Catholic schools; private, nonreligious schools (independent private schools); and private schools that do not classify themselves as either independent or Catholic (primarily religious schools such as Lutheran, Fundamentalist Christian, Jewish, and so on). For ease of presentation, this report identifies the four types of schools as follows: public; Catholic; private, nonreligious; and private, other religious.

In order to further differentiate types of schools, several school environment scales were created. School environment was determined by examining responses to several questions posed to school administrators.[33] These questions were grouped into three separate areas that represent: student problems, teacher engagement, and "academic press."[34]

The student problems scale represents the degree to which administrators thought such things as absenteeism, alcohol and drug use, student weapons, physical or verbal abuse of students toward teachers, and theft were problems in their school. The teacher engagement scale is intended to measure teacher morale and attitudes toward students.[35] For example, administrators were asked whether there are conflicts between teachers and administrators, whether teachers have a negative attitude toward the students or have difficulty motivating them, and whether teacher morale is high. Finally, "academic press" is an indication of the intensity or competitiveness that students experience in relation to their school work.[36] This scale was formulated from such questions as whether students place a high priority on learning, whether teachers encourage students to do their best, whether students are expected to do homework, and whether they face competition for grades.

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[31] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *A Profile of Schools Attended by Eighth Graders in 1988*, 1991 (Washington, D.C.).

[32] School-initiated contact with the parents is presented separately because it is parent-reported. School environment factors, on the other hand, were reported by school administrators.

[33] See U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *A Profile of Schools Attended by Eighth Graders in 1988*, 1991 (Washington, D.C.) for a discussion of the relationship between school environment and school type.

[34] See appendix A for a description of how the school environment scales were constructed. These scales were based on items reported by the school administrator. Thus, readers should bear in mind that these are school-level rather than student-level items.

Finally, in the NELS:88 survey, parents were asked about the frequency with which their eighth grader's school contacted them regarding such matters as their child's academic performance and program and their child's behavior. Parents were also asked about volunteering for the school, fund raising, and so on. These items were combined into a scale that measured school-initiated parent contact.

Parent–Child Discussions

The type of school that eighth graders attended was associated with whether or not their parents reported discussing current school experiences with them. Parents whose eighth grader attended public school were less likely to report such discussions than parents whose child attended private schools (table 4.1). Approximately 78 percent of parents whose eighth grader attended a public school reported discussing current school experiences, compared with 86 percent, 88 percent, and 90 percent, respectively, of Catholic, private, other religious school, and private, nonreligious school parents. A similar pattern was observed for discussions about high school plans. Public school parents (46 percent) were less likely than Catholic or private, nonreligious school parents (65 percent and 54 percent, respectively) to report regular discussions.

School environment was also related to parent-child discussions about school experiences. Parents whose child attended a school with serious student problems were less likely to discuss current school experiences with their eighth grader (77 percent) than parents whose child attended a school with only minimal problems (83 percent). Similarly, parents with a child in a school with strong academic press were more likely to discuss current school experiences with their eighth grader (82 percent) than those whose child attended a school with low academic press (76 percent). The amount of teacher engagement reported by a school was related to parent-child discussions concerning both current school experiences and high school plans. For instance, 82 percent of parents whose eighth grader attended a school with high teacher engagement reported discussing current school experiences, compared with 77 percent of parents with children in schools with low teacher engagement.

The frequency with which parents reported school-initiated parent contact was associated with all forms of parent-child discussions (e.g., current experiences, high school plans, and postsecondary education plans) measured in this survey. About 72 percent of parents whose eighth grader attended a school that initiated little parent contact reported discussing current school experiences, compared with 80 percent in schools with moderate contact, and 86 percent in schools that frequently contacted the parents. Similarly,

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[35] This scale is based on an administrator's assessment of overall teacher morale and attitudes. Individual teachers may have had different responses.

[36] Again, it is important to remember that this is the school administrator's assessment, not the students.

40 percent of parents with children in schools initiating little parent contact reported discussing high school plans with their eighth grader, compared with 46 percent in schools with moderate contact, and 55 percent in schools that frequently contacted the parents.

Table 4.1--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who regularly discussed current school experiences, high school plans, or future education plans, by school attributes

	Percent of parents who talk with child regularly about:		
	Current school experiences	High school plans	Education plans after high school
Total	79.4	47.2	38.3
School type			
Public	78.4	45.5	38.2
Catholic	85.5	64.6	40.5
Other religious	88.3	52.3	37.6
Private, nonreligious	90.1	54.1	37.6
School climate			
Student problems			
Serious	76.5	47.7	41.0
Moderate	79.3	45.9	37.7
Low	83.1	50.1	37.1
Teacher engagement			
Low	77.1	45.2	38.0
Moderate	79.8	46.5	38.1
High	82.3	52.3	39.2
Academic press			
Low	76.0	46.5	37.6
Moderate	79.7	46.5	38.4
High	81.9	49.0	38.7
School-initiated parent contact			
Low	71.5	39.9	34.4
Moderate	80.1	45.9	37.4
High	85.8	54.9	42.2

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Home Rules

Since nearly all parents reported setting rules regarding homework, there was little variation among groups whose children attended the different types of schools (table 4.2). However, parents with children in private, nonreligious schools were somewhat less likely to report setting rules regarding homework (87 percent) than parents with children in any other type of school (92 percent or more).

Table 4.2--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported setting rules regarding homework or maintaining a minimum GPA, by school attributes

	Percent of parents setting rules regarding:	
	Doing homework	Maintaining GPA
Total	92.0	72.7
School type		
Public	92.0	73.3
Catholic	93.7	71.4
Other religious	92.6	63.0
Private, nonreligious	86.5	59.9
School climate		
Student problems		
Serious	92.3	76.8
Moderate	91.8	72.2
Low	92.5	69.5
Teacher engagement		
Low	91.6	74.5
Moderate	92.1	71.9
High	92.3	72.3
Academic press		
Low	92.1	74.5
Moderate	92.0	72.7
High	91.9	71.1
School-initiated parent contact		
Low	90.5	71.9
Moderate	92.1	72.8
High	93.0	72.7

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Two school attributes—school type and student problems—were related to whether or not a parent reported setting rules about their eighth grader maintaining a minimum GPA. Just as parents with eighth graders in private, nonreligious schools were less likely to report setting rules regarding homework, they were also less likely to have rules about maintaining a GPA (60 percent) than parents with children in either public schools or Catholic schools (73 percent and 71 percent, respectively). Similarly, 77 percent of parents whose eighth graders attended schools with serious student problems reported setting GPA rules, compared with only 70 percent of parents whose eighth graders attended schools with minimal student problems.

Parents whose children attended different types of schools did not differ extensively in reporting rules regarding television viewing. However, parents whose children attended private, other religious schools tended to monitor all three aspects of television viewing (e.g., total hours watched on a school night, kind of shows watched, and early/late viewing) more than other parents (table 4.3). Among parents whose children attended private, other religious schools, 75 percent reported limiting the total number of television hours watched by their eighth graders compared with 64 percent or fewer of parents whose children attended other types of schools. Similarly 84 percent of parents with children in private, other religious schools monitored the kinds of programs viewed by their eighth graders compared with 77 percent or fewer of parents whose children attended other types of schools.

School environment showed very little association with how parents monitored their eighth grader's television viewing. On the other hand, the more parents reported that they were contacted by their child's school, the more likely they were to monitor their child's television viewing. Approximately 62 percent of parents with children in schools that initiated little contact reported monitoring the kinds of television shows their eighth grader watched, compared with 70 percent in schools with moderate contact, and 73 percent in schools that frequently contacted the parents.

Table 4.3--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported regulating television watching, by school attributes

	Percent of parents regulating TV watching by:		
	Limiting hours watched on school nights	Monitoring kinds of programs	Restricting early/late watching
		(percent)	
Total	61.7	68.9	84.4
School type			
Public	61.1	67.8	84.0
Catholic	64.0	76.8	85.9
Other religious	74.5	84.2	91.1
Private, nonreligious	63.9	68.9	86.2
School climate			
Student problems			
Serious	62.5	67.1	83.0
Moderate	61.2	68.9	84.4
Low	62.1	71.0	85.8
Teacher engagement			
Low	61.7	68.5	83.3
Moderate	61.3	69.0	84.8
High	62.9	70.0	85.1
Academic press			
Low	61.6	67.5	83.2
Moderate	61.4	69.4	84.6
High	62.4	69.4	85.1
School-initiated parent contact			
Low	56.4	62.4	78.9
Moderate	61.2	69.5	85.0
High	65.7	73.3	88.1

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Helping with Homework

Most school attributes had little, if any, association with how frequently parents reported helping with their eighth grader's homework (table 4.4). Among school environment measures, a modest difference was seen between parents whose eighth grader attended a school with serious student problems (32 percent reported seldom or never helping with homework) and parents whose child was in a school with minimal student problems (27 percent). On the other hand, as previously discussed with other types of parent involvement, school-initiated parent contact showed an association with whether or not parents reported helping with homework. Among parents whose eighth graders were in schools that initiated little parent contact, 38 percent reported never or seldom helping with their child's homework. By contrast, only 29 percent and 23 percent, respectively, of parents whose eighth graders were in schools that had moderate or frequent contact with parents answered never or seldom.

Table 4.4--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who offered various levels of help with their eighth grader's homework, by school attributes

		Percent of parents who help with homework:			
		Seldom/ never	1 or 2 times/month	1 or 2 times/week	Almost every day
Total	100	29.4	27.7	32.1	10.7
School type					
Public	100	29.8	27.7	31.9	10.6
Catholic	100	25.6	27.7	34.8	12.0
Other religious	100	27.1	31.5	32.1	9.3
Private, nonreligious	100	32.0	25.0	32.1	11.0
School climate					
Student problems					
Serious	100	32.3	25.3	30.5	11.9
Moderate	100	29.1	28.4	32.1	10.5
Low	100	27.0	29.0	33.9	10.1
Teacher engagement					
Low	100	30.2	26.7	32.1	11.0
Moderate	100	29.1	28.5	31.7	10.7
High	100	28.5	27.7	33.6	10.2
Academic press					
Low	100	31.8	27.2	30.1	10.9
Moderate	100	29.4	27.6	32.6	10.5
High	100	27.2	28.8	33.0	11.0
School-initiated parent contact					
Low	100	38.0	25.3	28.2	8.5
Moderate	100	28.6	28.9	32.4	10.1
High	100	23.1	28.5	35.8	12.7

NOTE: Because of rounding rows may not add to 100 percent.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

PTA Participation and Parent-Initiated Contact with the School

Whether a child attended a public or private school was strongly associated with how involved parents reported being in the PTA. While the three types of private schools differed little in this regard, parents whose eighth grader attended a public school were less likely to report being directly involved with the school than those whose child went to a private school. For example, only about 29 percent of parents with children in public schools were PTA members, compared with 57 percent or more of parents whose eighth graders attended private schools (table 4.5). Similarly, about one-third of public school parents, compared with 56 percent or more of private school parents, reported attending PTA meetings. An even bigger disparity was found between public and private school parents in relation to volunteering in the school, where only about 15 percent of public school parents reported volunteering, compared with 47 percent or more of private school parents. Again, this may reflect the policies of different schools; volunteering in some way may be mandatory in some private schools.

Parents of public and private school children did not differ as much in regard to whether or not they contacted the school about their eighth grader's academic program or performance as they did for PTA activities. Among parents whose eighth graders attended public schools, 52 percent indicated that they contacted the school regarding their eighth grader's performance, compared with 58 percent or more of parents whose children were in private schools. Likewise, 34 percent of parents associated with public schools reported contacting the school about their child's academic program, compared with 39 percent or more of parents associated with private schools.

High PTA membership, PTA meeting attendance, and school volunteerism were related to positive school environment measures. Parents whose eighth grader attended a school with minimal student problems, high teacher engagement, or strong academic press were more likely to be members of the PTA and attend meetings or volunteer in the schools than parents associated with schools that had serious student problems, low teacher engagement, or low academic press. For example, among parents with children in schools that had low teacher engagement, 28 percent were PTA members, compared with 42 percent of parents with children in schools where teacher engagement was high. Similarly, 16 percent of parents whose eighth graders attended schools with low teacher engagement volunteered in the school, compared with 29 percent of those parents whose eighth graders attended schools with high teacher engagement.

PTA involvement and school volunteerism also rose as school-initiated parent contact increased. Furthermore, while the school environment measures had little or modest association with school-initiated parent contact, parent-initiated contact with the school was strongly associated with how often their child's school contacted them.[37] Parents with eighth graders in schools that frequently initiated contact with parents contacted the school about their child's academic performance at twice and three times the rates, respectively, of parents whose eighth graders were in schools that initiated only moderate or little parent contact (73 percent compared with 54 and 27 percent, respectively). The same pattern held for parents who contacted the school about their child's academic program: 58 percent of these parents did so when school-initiated parent contact was high, compared with 32 percent and 14 percent, respectively, of parents associated with schools who had moderate or minimal contact with the parents.

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[37] This relationship suggests that parents are responding to school-initiated contact. That is, if the school is frequently contacting the parent, the parent, in turn, contacts the school. The direction of this interaction, however, cannot be distinguished.

Table 4.5--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported various levels of contact and participation with their eighth grader's school in school activities, by school attributes

	Contact school about:		PTA		
	Academic performance	Academic program	Member	Attend meetings	School volunteer
			(percent)		
Total	52.5	34.9	31.9	36.2	19.0
School type					
Public	51.5	34.1	28.6	32.8	14.7
Catholic	58.9	38.7	56.6	63.3	53.5
Other religious	64.4	43.5	58.7	61.0	47.2
Private, nonreligious	58.3	43.3	60.1	55.9	49.0
School climate					
Student problems					
Serious	50.1	33.6	23.9	33.2	12.5
Moderate	52.4	34.7	30.8	34.3	16.7
Low	55.2	36.5	43.5	44.0	31.8
Teacher engagement					
Low	51.4	34.1	27.8	33.9	15.6
Moderate	52.8	34.6	30.9	35.3	17.8
High	53.5	37.0	42.4	42.7	29.0
Academic press					
Low	51.0	32.4	23.0	33.0	14.3
Moderate	52.6	34.6	32.2	36.9	18.6
High	53.6	37.2	39.0	37.2	23.6
School-initiated parent contact					
Low	27.0	13.5	19.0	24.2	7.8
Moderate	53.6	32.4	31.0	35.0	16.6
High	73.0	57.6	45.3	47.9	33.2

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Chapter 5

Parent Involvement and Student Outcomes

The final step in this study was to determine whether or not there was an association between how involved parents reported being in their children's education and how well their eighth graders performed in school. There were two measures of student outcome examined. Cognitive outcomes were measured using mathematics and reading proficiency test scores. Proficiency scores related to specific behaviors (such as reading below a prescribed basic level) were reported. Initially, both high- and low-proficiency scores were examined. However, these scores exhibited expected patterns. For example, if a particular characteristic was associated with a greater proportion of students who had low scores, it was also associated with a smaller proportion of students who had high scores. Therefore, to simplify the presentation, the relationship between parental involvement and students who score below the basic level for either mathematics or reading is reported. With respect to mathematics, this means that students cannot perform simple arithmetical operations on whole numbers. Students who score below the basic level in reading cannot perform simple reading comprehension tasks, which include reproducing detail and/or the author's main thought.

The second outcome measure examined in this study was whether or not a student dropped out of school between 8th and 10th grade. The dropout status of NELS:88 participants was determined from the first followup survey conducted in the spring of 1990 (see appendix A for more details). The dropout rates presented here are only for students whose parents were included in the base-year survey.[38] Because of the influence that socioeconomic status has on students' test scores and dropout rates, all estimates are presented separately for each level of SES.

The results of this study indicate that the types of parental involvement measured in the NELS:88 survey had little association with whether or not either eighth graders scored below basic in reading or mathematics proficiency (table 5.1). A few modest associations were found such as a slight decline in the percentage of students scoring below basic in reading (13 percent compared with 11 percent) and math (18 percent compared with 15 percent) for middle-SES students when their parents reported being a school volunteer. Similarly, when middle-SES parents reported restricting the number of television viewing hours on a school day, their children were somewhat less likely to score below basic in reading (14 percent compared with 11 percent) and math (19 percent compared with 15 percent). By contrast, students whose parents reported helping their child "almost everyday" with homework, were *more* likely to score below the basic level in mathematics or reading than students whose parents seldom or never helped. A possible explanation for this result is that parents were reacting to their child's poor performance in school. An eighth grader who needs daily help with homework is one who is probably struggling in school. This association with homework was found at all levels of socioeconomic status. Figure 5.1 illustrates how the level of parental help with homework is related to proficiency in eighth-grade mathematics and reading among low-SES students.

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[38] The dropout rates reported here differ from the congressionally mandated dropout report (see U.S. Dept. of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1990*, 1991, Washington D.C.), which included all the base-year participants in addition to a sample of base-year ineligible students.

Table 5.1--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders who performed below basic in reading or math proficiency, by SES, and by varying levels of parental involvement

	Below basic – reading			Below basic – math		
	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES
Percent below basic						
Total	22.2	12.7	5.6	29.3	17.7	9.1
Percent below basic whose parents:						
Talk about school experiences						
Never	20.7	33.5	—	31.3	28.4	—
Rarely	24.1	12.8	2.6	30.2	18.6	11.1
Occasionally	23.5	13.2	5.4	29.0	17.3	10.4
Regularly	21.1	12.5	5.5	28.9	17.5	8.9
Talk about HS plans						
Never	22.8	13.2	1.7	34.0	17.9	13.7
Rarely	19.9	15.4	7.2	26.8	17.0	11.1
Occasionally	21.7	11.8	6.5	27.2	16.6	9.2
Regularly	23.2	13.3	4.6	31.4	18.7	8.8
Talk about post-HS plans						
Never	23.3	16.9	3.2	31.2	26.3	14.6
Rarely	22.8	12.5	6.9	28.9	18.1	8.7
Occasionally	21.2	12.5	6.1	27.5	16.7	8.6
Regularly	23.0	12.9	4.7	31.3	18.2	9.6
Help with homework						
Seldom/never	20.5	9.4	4.3	27.3	12.8	6.5
Once/twice a month	20.2	10.2	4.5	26.1	14.4	8.2
Once/twice a week	22.6	15.3	6.2	31.6	20.7	9.9
Almost everyday	28.7	19.1	8.9	36.2	27.2	14.1
Rule about TV programs						
Yes	22.0	12.4	5.8	28.9	17.4	8.9
No	21.4	13.2	4.4	29.3	17.6	9.5
Rule early/late TV						
Yes	21.7	12.7	5.6	29.1	17.4	9.0
No	22.3	11.8	4.0	28.9	17.4	9.1
Rule TV hours school day						
Yes	22.5	14.0	6.1	29.8	19.3	9.5
No	20.6	10.7	4.4	27.7	14.6	8.2
Rule maintaining GPA						
Yes	21.5	12.8	6.2	28.4	17.8	9.7
No	22.0	12.2	4.0	30.3	16.2	7.4

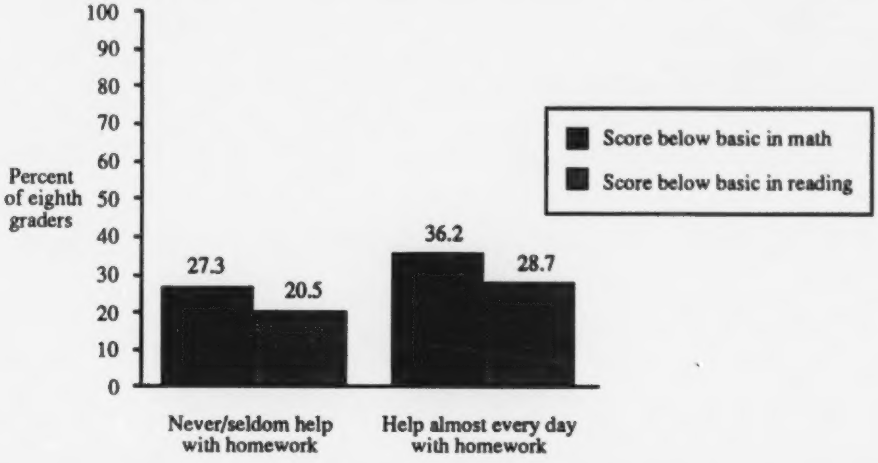
Table 5.1--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders who performed below basic in reading or math proficiency, by SES, and by varying levels of parental involvement—Continued

	Below basic – reading			Below basic – math		
	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES
PTA member						
Yes	20.8	11.2	5.4	27.8	14.1	8.8
No	21.5	13.2	5.5	29.1	18.7	9.3
Attend PTA meetings						
Yes	22.4	13.1	5.8	30.3	16.9	9.5
No	21.0	12.3	5.2	28.4	17.7	8.6
School volunteer						
Yes	18.6	10.6	5.5	25.7	14.9	9.4
No	21.8	13.0	5.5	29.4	17.8	8.8

— Sample too small (less than 30) for reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey" and "1990 First Followup Student Survey."

Figure 5.1--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders who scored below basic in reading or math proficiency whose parents reported never or seldom helping, compared with those who frequently helped with their homework among low-SES students



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent and Student Survey."

In contrast to eighth-grade reading and mathematics proficiency, parental involvement was strongly associated with whether or not a student stayed in school between the 8th and 10th grades. This was especially true for students from poor families who are most at risk of dropping out (table 5.2). Approximately 14 percent of low-SES students dropped out of school between the 8th and 10th grades. As discussed in the following sections, among these students, many types of parental participation measured in the NELS:88 survey were associated with lower dropout rates. Students from middle-SES families were less likely to drop out of school than low-SES students (about 4 percent). Nevertheless, even among these students, for some types of parental involvement, students whose parents participated were less likely to drop out of school than those whose parents did not. The dropout rate for high-SES students was less than 2 percent. With such a small sample of dropouts, differences in rates between students whose parents were involved and those who were not were difficult to determine.

Parent–Child Discussions

Students from low-SES families whose parents reported never discussing future education plans with their child were much more likely to drop out of school between the 8th and 10th grades than students whose parents regularly discussed such topics (figure 5.2). The difference in dropout rates was especially large in relation to discussions about education plans after high school: 25 percent of students whose parents reported never having such discussions dropped out of school, compared with 13 percent of students whose parents reported regular discussions.[39]

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[39] Due to the small sample of dropouts, statistically significant differences in dropout rates for parent-child discussions were not found for students of middle- or high-SES families.

Table 5.2--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders who dropped out of school between 8th and 10th grade, by SES, and by varying levels of parental involvement

	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES
Percent dropouts			
Total	14.3	3.8	1.4
Percent dropouts whose parents:			
Talk about school experiences			
Never	28.4	*53.5	—
Rarely	17.5	2.6	1.0
Occasionally	14.6	4.5	1.4
Regularly	13.1	3.3	0.7
Talk about HS plans			
Never	22.3	19.4	3.5
Rarely	13.6	2.9	3.9
Occasionally	12.6	3.8	0.8
Regularly	15.4	3.3	1.6
Talk about post-HS			
Never	24.6	16.7	0.0
Rarely	17.9	2.8	0.5
Occasionally	12.0	3.1	1.0
Regularly	12.9	4.1	2.1
Help with homework			
Seldom/never	15.0	3.2	1.4
Once/twice a month	10.9	2.9	1.0
Once/twice a week	17.5	3.7	0.4
Almost everyday	8.9	5.3	0.2
Rule about TV programs			
Yes	11.4	3.1	0.7
No	17.5	4.9	1.0
Rule early/late TV			
Yes	11.4	3.4	0.8
No	21.2	6.0	0.7
Rule TV hours school day			
Yes	10.4	3.7	0.6
No	18.7	3.5	1.0
Rule maintaining GPA			
Yes	11.9	3.4	0.7
No	18.9	4.2	0.9

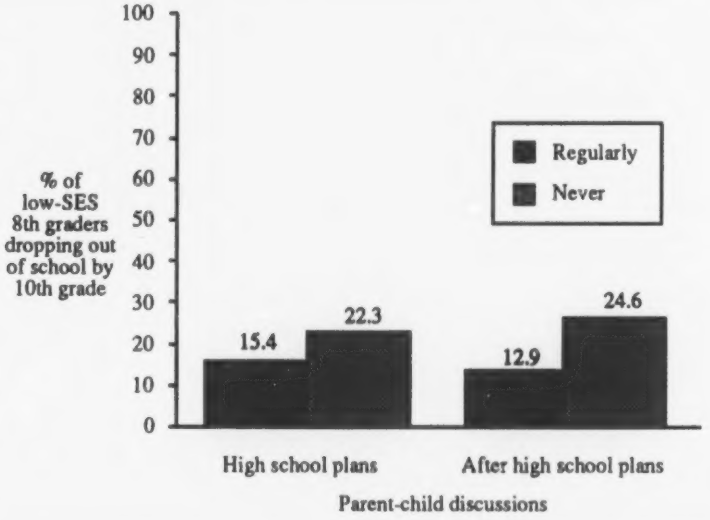
Table 5.2--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders who dropped out of school between 8th and 10th grade, by SES, and by varying levels of parental involvement—Continued

	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES
PTA member			
Yes	10.7	1.8	1.3
No	15.1	4.4	1.6
Attend PTA meetings			
Yes	10.6	2.7	2.0
No	16.3	4.1	1.0
School volunteer			
Yes	15.9	1.4	2.7
No	14.4	4.1	0.8

—Sample too small (less than 30) for reliable estimate.
* Note that this estimate represents only 32 cases making the standard error very large (23 percent).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Longitudinal Study of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey" and "1990 First Followup Student Survey."

Figure 5.2--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders dropping out of school between the 8th and 10th grades whose parents reported either never or regularly discussing future education plans among low-SES students



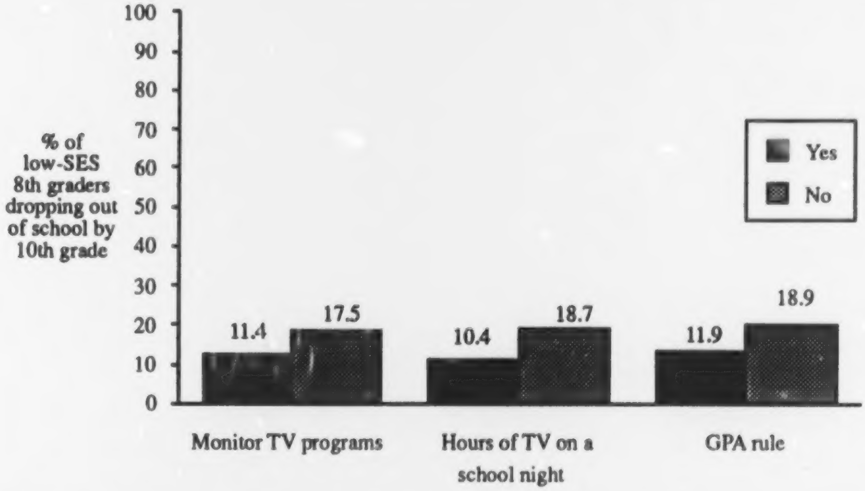
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey" and "1990 First Followup Student Survey."

Television Restrictions and Other Home Rules

Low-SES students whose parents indicated that they monitored their eighth grader's television viewing were less likely to drop out of school than students whose parents did not report such restrictions. However, the differences in dropout rates were not as great as those found for parent-child discussions. Figure 5.3 illustrates how low-SES students whose parents restricted their television viewing dropped out of school at lower rates than students whose parents did not report such restrictions. For example, 19 percent of low-SES students whose parents did not limit the number of hours watched on a school night dropped out of school, compared with 10 percent whose parents reported such a restriction.

Requiring a certain grade-point average was also associated with whether or not eighth graders from low-SES families dropped out of school. About 12 percent of students whose parents set such rules dropped out of school, compared with 19 percent of those whose parents did not. Again, because of the small sample of dropouts, similar differences in dropout rates were not found for middle- or high-SES students.

Figure 5.3--Percentage of 1988 eighth graders dropping out of school between the 8th and 10th grades whose parents reported restricting TV watching or setting rules about maintaining a minimum GPA among low-SES students



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey" and "1990 First Followup Student Survey."

School-Directed Activities

School-directed activities in which parents reported active participation, such as PTA activities, were often associated with lower dropout rates. This was especially true for middle-SES students, and to a lesser extent, for low-SES students (see table 5.2). Among middle-SES eighth graders whose parents were PTA members, 1.8 percent dropped out of school, compared with 4.4 percent of those whose parents were not members. Similarly, 2.7 percent of middle-SES eighth graders whose parents attended PTA meetings dropped out, compared with 4.1 percent whose parents did not do so. In addition, for middle-SES eighth graders whose parents volunteered in the school, 1.4 percent dropped out, compared with 4.1 percent of those whose parents did not volunteer. Among low-SES eighth graders, those students whose parents attended PTA meetings dropped out at a statistically significant lower rate (11 percent), compared with students whose parents did not attend meetings (16 percent).

Chapter 6

Summary and Conclusions

This study profiles how parents report being involved in their eighth grader's schooling and to what extent this involvement influences related aspects of their child's school performance. The results indicated that parental involvement increases with socioeconomic status and parents' educational attainment. When socioeconomic status was taken into consideration, single mothers differed little in the degree to which they participated in their eighth grader's education compared with two-parent families. There were, however, differences among racial–ethnic groups in parental involvement even when SES was held constant. Contrary to what one might expect, parents of black children reported greater participation in their eighth grader's education than parents of white children, and parents of Asian children reported being less involved. However, as discussed under "Limitations of Parent Involvement Measures," it is not always possible to measure cultural influences as they are related to parent involvement in a broad-based survey such as NELS. For example, in a recent examination of the role of the family in the academic performance of Indochinese refugees, it was found that parents set standards and goals for each evening and provided time for their children's homework by assuming responsibility for chores. Further, culturally based beliefs of these refugees such as "love of learning" were rated most often as the factor accounting for their academic success.[40]

The relatively high involvement reported by black parents as measured by the NELS:88 survey, on the other hand, may reflect an increased vigilance by parents for children who historically have not had the same educational opportunities as their white peers. In a recent review of mathematics and science education provided in American schools, it was shown that the proportion of classes judged to be high-ability diminished as non-Asian minority enrollment increased.[41]

In the NELS:88 survey, two types of parental involvement were measured. One was a measure of direct parent–child interactions that included discussions about school experiences and future education; setting home rules such as doing homework and restricting television viewing; and helping with their eighth grader's homework. The other type of involvement was school-directed participation such as attending PTA meetings and volunteering in the schools. In general, the differences observed among parent groups were greater for school-directed involvement (e.g., PTA membership) than they were for direct parent–child involvement (e.g., parent–child discussions about school experiences). For example, 12 percent and 54 percent, respectively, of low-SES and high-SES parents reported being PTA members; whereas 66 percent and 89 percent, respectively, of low-SES and high-SES parents reported regularly discussing school experiences with their child.

There were few associations observed in this study between parental involvement and whether or not eighth graders scored below basic in mathematics or reading proficiency, and not all were positive. There was a modest decline in the percentage of middle-SES students who scored below basic in reading and math proficiency when their parents reported volunteering in the school. On the other hand, students whose parents reported helping them nearly everyday with their homework were *more* likely to score below basic in math and reading. This suggests, however, that parents who reported helping with their eighth grader's homework so frequently, may have been responding to a child who was struggling in school. Thus, the parents were intervening in order to prevent their eighth grader from failing, or worse, dropping out of school.

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[40] N, Caplan, M. Choy, and J. Whitmore, "Indochinese Refugee Families and Academic Achievement," *Scientific American* (February 1992).

[41] J. Oakes, *Multiplying Inequalities*, Santa Monica, The Rand Corporation (1990).

Unlike the relationship between parental involvement and eighth-grade reading or mathematics proficiency, parental involvement was strongly associated with whether or not students dropped out of school between the 8th and 10th grades. This was particularly true for low-SES students who are most at risk of dropping out. For these students, differences in dropout rates were seen for many types of parental involvement, especially direct parent-child interactions. Students whose parents reported regularly discussing future education plans, whose parents restricted television viewing, and whose parents set rules about maintaining a minimum grade-point average all dropped out at lower rates than students whose parents did not do so. Middle-SES students tended to benefit from their parents' school-directed participation. These students dropped out less often when their parents reported regular participation in the PTA, as opposed to those whose parents did not do so.[42]

The spectrum of family–school activities that influences a child's performance in school is complex and changes for different families, schools, cultures, and communities. Finding direct links between specific parent behaviors and student cognitive outcomes is difficult at best. Several studies have shown that various types of parental involvement are related to their child's achievement. However, these relationships are usually shown to be weak or indirect. This study also showed a weak association between parental involvement and eighth-grade reading or mathematics proficiency. However, the association between parents' participation and dropping out of school at an early age is strong and compelling, particularly for eighth graders from low-socioeconomic families. The odds of these children dropping out of school between the 8th and 10th grades were significantly lessened when their parents reported regularly participating in their schooling. This was especially true for direct parent-child involvement. These results suggest that parents play a crucial role in keeping their child in school and that innovative programs being developed at state and local levels that motivate parents to participate at all levels of their child's education should be encouraged and supported.

Future Research

In this report we have presented a descriptive profile of the NELS: 88 parents, and the extent to which they reported participating in their eight graders' education. In doing so, we wished to illustrate the breadth of information available for both parents and students in the NELS survey. We hope this analysis will serve as a springboard for researchers to pursue more specific and detailed types of analysis, especially with the current availability of the first follow-up (10th grade) survey. These analyses could take many directions from looking at other types of student outcomes to doing path analyses to determine how much socio-demographic factors such as SES and the education level of parents are modified by parental involvement. The fully linked set of NELS student, parent, teacher, and school administrator data have enormous potential as a source of current educational data for educational researchers and policy decision makers.

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[42] The percentage of high-SES students who dropped out was too low to determine dropout differences in relation to parental involvement.

Appendix A

Methodology and Technical Notes

Sample Design

The NELS:88 base-year study employed a two-stage, stratified random sample design.[1] The population of schools was restricted to "regular" public and private schools with eighth graders in the United States. Excluded from the sample were Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools, special education schools for the handicapped, area vocational schools that do not enroll students directly, and schools for dependents of U.S. personnel overseas.

In the first stage of the sampling process, 1,052 schools with eighth grades were used for the NCES-sponsored core sample. In order to ensure a balanced sample, schools were stratified by region, urbanicity, and minority percentage prior to sampling. To make the sample more useful for policy analysis, private schools were oversampled. Just under 70 percent of the sampled schools are original selections, while 30.4 percent are replacement schools (schools drawn from the sampling stratum to replace an initial selection that refused to participate).

The second stage of the sampling process was the selection of students within schools. In this stage, students who were judged by a representative from the school as being unable to complete the survey instruments were identified. Specifically, students identified as mentally handicapped, having physical or emotional problems that would seriously interfere with their ability to complete the survey instruments, or having a language barrier interfering with their completion of the survey instruments were excluded from the sample. About 5.4 percent of the potential sample was excluded for these reasons. Of those students who were excluded, a majority (57 percent) were excluded for reason of mental disabilities, with most of the rest (35 percent) excluded for language reasons, and a small number excluded because of physical disabilities (8 percent). Again for policy analysis reasons, students of Hispanic or of Asian or Pacific Islander (A/PI) origin were oversampled. This oversampling was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs (OBEMLA). On average, 26 students were sampled per school. This two-stage process resulted in the inclusion of over 26,000 eighth graders in the sample.

Teachers, school administrators, and parents of the eighth graders also participated in NELS:88. Teachers were selected on a pre-assigned basis in two of four subject areas—mathematics, science, English, and social studies (history/government). Each school was randomly assigned to one of the following combinations of curriculum areas: mathematics and English; mathematics and social studies; science and English; or science and social studies. Over 5,000 teachers filled out student-specific evaluations for a total of 23,188 sample students. While the teachers were not selected as a representative sample, their evaluations of sample students are linked to the specific student records, as are parent and school administrator reports. The school administrator (principal or headmaster) of each sample school was asked to complete a school administrator questionnaire. A total of 1,035 school administrators completed school questionnaires.

Selection of Parents

One parent questionnaire was sought for each student participating in the NELS:88 survey, regardless of whether the student resided in a one- or two-parent household (or joint custody arrangement, in the case of divorced parents). The parent who was "best informed" about the child's educational activities was asked to complete a NELS:88 parent questionnaire. Thus, the parent respondent was essentially self-selected, though the screening selection by the eighth grade student and chance factors created unequal opportunities for self-selection between the two-parent home or between multiple households with dual child custody arrangements. A total of 22,651 parents completed the questionnaire (94 percent weighted-response rate). The natural mother completed the questionnaire in the overwhelming majority of cases (79 percent). In about 17 percent of the cases, the father provided the information; and in a very small percentage of cases (about 2 percent), the parent data were supplied by a grandparent, other relative, or non-relative guardian. For this analysis, a very small number of parents (less than one percent) who completed the questionnaire, but who did not reside with the eighth grader at least 50 percent of the time, were excluded.

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[1] U.S. Department of Education, NCES, B. Spencer et al., "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) Base Year Sample Design Report" (1990).

First Followup Dropout Data

The NELS:88 first followup survey was conducted in the spring of 1990. Students, dropouts, teachers, and school administrators participated in the followup, with a successful data collection effort for approximately 93 percent of the base-year student respondents. In this report, the only variable used from the first followup survey was the dropout status of base-year respondents whose parents also participated in the base-year survey. The dropout rates, therefore, differ from those in the congressionally mandated dropout report.[2] The dropout rates in that report included all base-year respondents plus a sample of base-year ineligible students.

Data Limitations

The target population for the base-year survey consisted of all public and private schools containing eighth grades in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Excluded from the sample were Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools, special education schools for the handicapped, area vocational schools that do not enroll students directly, and schools for dependents of U.S. personnel overseas. In addition, students excluded from the sample included those with severe mental handicaps, students whose command of the English language was not sufficient for understanding the survey materials, and students with physical or emotional problems that would make it unduly difficult for them to participate. Given these limitations, users of NELS:88 data should exercise caution in interpreting findings for certain groups. For example, it is estimated that approximately 10 percent of American Indian children attend schools that are affiliated with the BIA. Thus, the estimates for this subpopulation may not be representative.

Accuracy of Estimates

The statistics in this report are population estimates derived from the sample described in the preceding section. Two broad categories of error occur in such estimates: sampling and nonsampling error. Sampling error occurs because samples are not populations. However, the nature of the error depends upon the sample design, and the error properties of many types of sample designs (including two-stage designs such as the one used in this study) are known. Nonsampling error occurs not only in sample surveys but also in population censuses.

Nonsampling error may arise from a number of sources, such as the inability to obtain cooperation from each sampled school (school nonresponse), or the inability to obtain information from each sampled student in cooperating schools (student nonresponse). A third source of nonresponse contributing to nonsampling error is found at the item level. Cooperating students or parents may not have answered every question in the survey. In addition, ambiguous definitions, differences in interpreting questions, inability or unwillingness to give correct information, mistakes in recoding or coding data, and other errors of collecting and processing the data can result in nonsampling error.

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[2] U.S. Dept. of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1990*, 1991 (Washington D.C.).

The precision with which one can use survey results to make inferences to a population depends upon the magnitude of both sampling and nonsampling errors. In large sample surveys, such as the NELS:88 study, sampling errors are generally minimal, except when estimates are made for relatively small subpopulations, such as for American Indians (N=315).

The nonsampling errors are more difficult to estimate. The major sources of nonsampling error considered were school, student, and item level nonresponse. The NELS:88 base year student response rate was above 93 percent and the item response rates within instruments, for the items used to develop the estimates in this report, were above 95.3 percent. The item response rates for the items used in this study from the parent survey were 94 percent or higher. The weights used to calculate the estimates were constructed in a fashion that compensated for instrument nonresponse. Weighting procedures are explained in the NELS:88 *Base Year Student User's Manual.*[3] The small bias due to nonresponse is documented in the *NELS:88 Base Year Sample Design Report.*[4]

Statistical Procedures

The statistical comparisons in this report were based on the **t** statistic. Generally, whether the statistical test is considered significant or not is determined by calculating a **t** value for the difference between a pair of means or proportions and comparing this value to published tables of values at certain critical levels, called alpha levels. The alpha level is an *a priori* statement of the probability of inferring that a difference exists when, in fact, it does not.

In order to make proper inferences and interpretations from the statistics, a number of issues must be kept in mind. First, comparisons resulting in large **t** statistics may appear to merit special attention. This is somewhat misleading since the size of the **t** statistic depends not only on the observed differences in means or percentage being compared but also on the number of respondents in the categories used for comparison, and on the degree of variability among respondents within categories. A small difference compared across a large number of respondents could result in a large **t** statistic. Second, when multiple statistical comparisons are made on the same data, it becomes increasingly likely that an indication of a population difference will be erroneously given. Even when there is no difference in the population, at an alpha-level of .05 there is still a 5 percent chance of declaring that an observed **t** value representing one comparison in the sample is large enough to be statistically significant. As the number of comparisons increases, the risk of making such an error in inference also increases.

To guard against errors of inference based upon multiple comparisons, the Bonferonni procedure to correct significance tests for multiple contrast was used. This method corrects the significance (or alpha) level for the total number of contrasts made with a particular classification variable. For each classification variable, there are (K*(K-1)/2) possible contrasts (or nonredundant pairwise comparisons), where K is the number of categories. For example, since SES has three categories, K=3 and there are (3*2)/2=3 possible comparisons between the categories. The Bonferonni procedure divides the alpha-level for a single **t** test (for example, .05) by the number of possible pairwise comparisons, to give a new alpha that is corrected for the fact that multiple contrasts are being made.

Standard errors for the estimates in each of the tables are presented in the appendix. The standard errors were calculated using the STRATTAB program, which uses a Taylor series approximation to calculate standard errors based upon complex survey designs.[5] A version of this program is available from NCES upon request. The standard errors reported take into account the clustering in the sampling procedure; they are generally higher than standard errors calculated under the assumptions of simple random sampling.

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[3] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *NELS:88 Base Year Student Component Date File Users Manual*, 1990 (Washington D.C.).

[4] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics *NELS:88 Base Year Sample Design Report*, 1990 (Washington D.C.).

Interested readers can compute the t statistic between estimates from various subgroups presented in the tables using the following formula:

$$t = \frac{P1-P2}{SQRT\ (se1 * se1 + se2 * se2)}$$

where P1 and P2 are the estimates to be compared and se1 and se2 are their corresponding standard errors.

Variables Used[6]

Classification variables were selected to describe student characteristics such as sex, race-ethnicity, and socioeconomic status; school characteristics such as region, urbanicity, and school type; and mathematics or science class characteristics such as class type and test quartiles for each student. Most of these variables were taken directly from the student data file. The following classification variables were used in this report. The names in parentheses are the variable names that appear on the public use tape if different from the label.

Weights

(BYQWT)

Calculated from the design weight (RAWWT) for the student questionnaire; adjusted for the fact that some of the selected students did not complete the questionnaire.

(WEIGHTP)

Panel weight used for 1990 first follow-up eligibles' dropout status.

Classification variables

RACE

Race was also constructed from several sources of information. The first source was the student self-report (item 31A). Second, if the student information was missing, data from the parent questionnaire were used. A small percentage of students who used the American Indian/Alaskan Native category but whose parents responded "white, not Hispanic" were recoded to "white, not Hispanic" after a subsample of the parents was interviewed as a further check of the validity of student responses. The race categories are Asian/Pacific Islander; Hispanic, regardless of race; Black, not of Hispanic origin; white, not of Hispanic origin; and American Indian or Alaskan Native. Although identification as members of different Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander racial-ethnic subgroups was reported by students, these subgroup percentages are not presented in this report.

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[5] C. Ogden, "StratTab User's Guide," MPR Associates, 1989.

[6] For detailed information about the all the variables in the NELS:88 parent file consult: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *NELS:88, Base-Year: Parent Component, Data File User's Manual*, 1989 (Washington D.C.).

1=Asian or Pacific Islander
2=Hispanic, regardless of race
3=Black, not of Hispanic origin
4=White, not of Hispanic origin
5=American Indian or Alaskan Native

SES (BYSESQ)

Socioeconomic status was constructed using the following parent questionnaire data: father's educational level, mother's educational level, father's occupation, mother's occupation, and family income (data coming from parent questionnaire items 30, 31, 34B, 37B, and 80). Educational level data were recoded as for the composite **PARENT EDUCATION.** Occupational data were recoded using the Duncan SEI scale as used in HS&B. Each non-missing component was standardized to a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. Non-missing standardized components were averaged, yielding the SES composite.

For cases where all parent data components were missing (8.1 percent of the participants), student data were used to compute the SES. The first four components from the student data are the same as the components used from parent data (in other words, education-level data, items 34A and 34B, similarly recoded; occupational data, items 4B and 7B of student questionnaire part one, also recoded). The fifth component for SES from the student data consisted of summing the non-missing household items listed in 35A-P (after recoding "Not Have Item"), calculating a simple mean of these items, and then standardizing this mean. If eight or more items in 35A-P were non-missing, this component was computed; otherwise it was set to missing. All components coming from the student data were standardized. Non-missing standardized components were averaged, yielding the SES composite for those cases where parent data were either missing or not available. The student data were used to construct SES if all components based on parent data were missing and at least one component based on student data was not missing. Otherwise SES was set to missing. The actual range for SES is -2.97 through 2.56. SES is divided into quartiles, with 1 = lowest and 4 = highest. In this report the middle two quartiles were collapsed.

1=Highest 25%
2=Middle 50%
3=Lowest 25%

RACE by SES

Constructed from RACE and SES variables.

FAMILY COMPOSITION (NEWFCOMP)

Constructed by NCES based upon the variables:

BYP1A1	Respondent's relationship to eighth grader
BYP1A2	Partner's relationship to eighth grader

1=Mother and father
2=Mother and step father/male guardian
3=Father and step mother/female guardian

4=Other two-parent combinations
5=Single mother/female guardian
6=Single father/male guardian

FAMILY COMPOSITION BY SES

Constructed from NEWFCOMP and SES

PARENT'S EDUCATION (MAPACPED)

Constructed by NCES based on:

BYP1A1	Respondent's relationship to eighth grader
BYP1A2	Partner's relationship to eighth grader
BYP30	Highest level of education respondent completed
BYP31	Spouse's highest level of education

1=Both HS dropouts
2=One dropout/one HS grad
3=Both HS grads
4=One HS grad, one college grad
5=Both college grads
6=One HS grad, one advanced degree
7=One college grad, one advanced degree
8=Both advanced degrees
9=One dropout, one college grad/adv degree
10=Single mother, HS dropout
11=Single mother, HS grad
12=Single mother, some college
13=Single mother, college grad
14=Single mother, adv degree
15=Single father, HS dropout
16=Single father, HS grad
17=Single father, some college
18=Single father, college grad
19=Single father, adv degree

For this analysis, the following aggregations were made:
4,6,9=two-parents, one college grad
5,7,8=two-parents, both college grades
11,12=single mother, HS grad
13,14=single mother, college grad
16,17=single father, HS grad
18,19=single father, college grad

PARENT'S EMPLOYMENT (MAPAEMPL)

Constructed by NCES based on:

BYP1A1	Respondent's relationship to eighth grader
BYP1A2	Partner's relationship to eighth grader
BYP32	During the past 4 weeks were you working
BYP35	During the past week was spouse working

1=Two parents, both working
2=Two parents, father working
3=Two parents, mother working
4=Two parents, neither working
5=Single mother, working
6=Single mother, not working
7=Single father, working
8=Single father, not working

FAMILY INCOME (TOTINCOME)

Constructed by NCES based on:
BYP80 Total family income from all sources, 1987
1=under $15K
2=$15K to under $25K
3=$25K to under $35K
4=$35K to under $50K
5=$50K or over

PARENT'S AGES (MABRTHYR and PABRTHYR)

Constructed by NCES based on:

BYP8	Respondent's year of birth
BYP9	Spouse's year of birth

1 or 2=49 or older
3 or 4=39-48
5= 34-38
6= 29-33
7= 28 or younger

NUMBER OF SIBLINGS (BYP3A)

0-6, 0=none, 6=six or more

NON-English LANGUAGE IN HOME (BYLM)

1=Yes
2=No

School Variables

SCHOOL TYPE (G8CTRL)

Classifies the school into one of four sampling strata of public, Catholic, independent (private, nonreligious), or other private (religious other than Catholic). Some of this information was taken directly from the QED file. QED is a standard school universe file maintained by Quality Education Data, and correlates well with the Common Core of Data maintained by the U.S. Department of Education. The list used for sampling independent schools was the membership list of the National Association of Independent Schools.

The second scheme classified schools into public, Catholic, religious other private, and non-religious other private. This classification appears on the NELS:88 base-year public-use files. In the two schemes, the public and Catholic school categories are the same, but the remaining private school categories contain somewhat different mixes of schools.

1=Public school
2=Catholic school
3=Private, other religious affiliation
4=Private, no religious affiliation

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT COMPOSITES

There were three school-level "environment" composites that were created from variables taken from the administrator file. Scales were created by combining responses to several items asked of the school administrators. Caution should be taken when interpreting these variables in the tabulations since they are school level and not student or teacher level. For example, a variable such as "teacher engagement" refers to a whole school, not just the eighth grade math or science teachers. The table below shows the scales created and the input variables for each. For each of these scales, a factor analysis and a reliability analysis showed the feasibility of combining the items into a scale. (The alpha statistic for each scale is shown in the table below.)

Student problems
1=Serious
2=Moderate
3=Low

Teacher engagement
1=Low
2=Moderate
3=High

Academic press
1=Low
2=Moderate
3=High

Variables that make up the School Environment Scales and their alpha statistic from the reliability analysis

Source	Scale	Alpha statistic
	Teacher engagement	.73
BYSC47E	Teachers encourage students to do their best	
BYSC47G	Teacher morale is high	
BYSC47M	Teachers respond to individual needs	
BYSC47I *	Teachers have difficulty motivating students	
BYSC47H *	Teachers have negative attitude about students	
BYSC47A *	Conflicts between teachers and administrators	
	Academic press	.71
BYSC47C	Students place a priority on learning	
BYSC47E	Teachers encourage students to do their best	
BYSC47F	Students are expected to do homework	
BYSC47O	Students face competition for grades	

Variables that make up the School Environment Scales and their alpha statistic from the reliability analysis--Continued

	Student behavior problems	.88
BYSC49A	Student tardiness	
BYSC49B	Absenteeism	
BYSC49C	Class cutting	
BYSC49D	Physical conflicts among students	
BYSC49E	Robbery or theft	
BYSC49F	Vandalism	
BYSC49G	Alcohol use	
BYSC49H	Drug use	
BYSC49I	Carrying weapons	
BYSC49J	Physical abuse of teachers	
BYSC49K	Verbal abuse of teachers	

* These items were reverse-coded for consistency of scaling.

Parent Involvement Variables

DISCUSS CURRENT EXPERIENCES	(BYP66)
DISCUSS HIGH SCHOOL PLANS	(BYP67)
DISCUSS ED. PLANS AFTER HS	(BYP68)

1=Never
2=Rarely
3=Occasionally
4=Regularly

HOMEWORK RULE	(BYP65B)
GPA RULE	(BYP65A)
MONITOR TV PROGRAMS	(BYP64A)
RESTRICT EARLY/LATE VIEWING	(BYP64B)
LIMIT HOURS ON SCHOOL NIGHT	(BYP64D)
PTA MEMBER	(BYP59A)
PTA MEETINGS	(BYP59B)
SCHOOL VOLUNTEER	(BYP59D)

1=Yes
2=No

HELP WITH HOMEWORK	(BYP69)

1=Seldom/never
2=Once/twice a month
3=Once/twice a week
4=Almost everyday

CONTACT SCHOOL	--Academic performance	(BYP57A)
	--Academic program	(BYP57B)

1=None
2=Once or twice
3=3 or 4 times
4=More than 4 times

BELIEFS	Homework worthwhile	(BYP74B)
	Child is working hard	(BYP74D)
	Child enjoys school	(BYP74E)
	Adequate say in schl policy	(BYP74J)
	Parents work together well	(BYP74K)

1=Strongly agree
2=Agree
3=Disagree
4=Strongly disagree

EXPECTATIONS FOR FUTURE EDUCATION (BYP76)
1=Less than HS
2=HS grad
3=Vocational training
4=Voc, less than 1 year
5=Voc, one to 2 years
6=Voc, 2 years or more
7=College, less than 2 years
8=College, 2 or more years
9=College, finish 2-year program
10=College grad
11=Masters or equivalent
12=Ph.D., M.D. or other equiv

For this analysis the following aggregations were made:

4,5,6	Vocational training
7,8,9	Some college
11,12	Advanced degree

AFTER SCHOOL SUPERVISION

Where they usually go after school (BYP73)

1=Neighbor's
2=Sitter's
3=Relative's
4=Friend's
5=After school community program
6=Extracurricular activities
7=Organized sports
8=Home
9=Job
10=Other places
11=Don't know

Who is home: possible responses were usually, sometimes, rarely, never

Mother	(BYP72A)
Father	(BYP72B)
Adult relative	(BYP72C)
Sitter	(BYP72D)
Adult neighbor	(BYP72E)
Older sibling	(BYP72F)
Younger sibling	(BYP72G)
No one home	(BYP72H)

Outcome Variables

Seven ratings are reported that characterize the student's proficiency in reading and mathematics. Proficiency at each level was tested independently. The definition of proficiency levels are as follows:

MATH PROFICIENCY (PROFMATH)
1=Below basic
2=Basic level
3=Intermediate level
4=Advanced level

Basic level items require the ability to successfully carry out simple arithmetical operations on whole numbers. Intermediate level implies basic competencies plus the addition of simple operations with decimals, fractions, and roots. Advanced level requires the ability to master simple problem-solving tasks. Unlike basic and intermediate levels that require the rote application of rules, performance at the advanced level requires conceptual understanding and/or the development of a solution strategy.

READING PROFICIENCY (PROFREAD)
1=Below basic
2=Basic
3=Advanced

Basic proficiency is defined by competence in simple reading comprehension, including the reproduction of detail and/or the author's main thought. Advanced level of proficiency implies the ability to make inferences beyond the author's main thought and/or to understand and evaluate relatively abstract concepts.

DROPOUT STATUS (FU1DROP2)
1=Not a dropout
2=Dropout
3=Stopout

For this analysis, only those students who were dropouts as of the first followup (FU1DROP2 = 1) were considered dropouts. The rates reported here will differ from the congressionally mandated report (see discussion above, "First Followup Dropout Rates") because only base-year respondents whose parents also participated in the base-year survey are included in the analysis.

Appendix B

Standard Error Tables

Table 1--Data for figures 1.1-1.4 and table 1.1. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who report various family characteristics, by school type

Characteristic	Percent of all parents	Percent of public school parents	Percent of private school parents		
			Catholic schools	Other religious schools	Non-religious schools
Total					
unweighted N	22490	18033	2168	945	1344
Family composition					
unweighted N	21996	17606	2131	928	1331
Mother & father	0.519	0.567	1.458	1.615	1.547
Mother & male guardian/step parent	0.284	0.313	0.601	0.999	1.094
Father & female guardian/step parent	0.138	0.153	0.266	0.502	0.422
Other two adult families	0.089	0.097	0.246	0.425	0.725
Single mother/female gdn/step parent	0.415	0.456	1.195	1.374	0.961
Single father/male gdn/step parent	0.113	0.125	0.332	0.222	0.332
Number of siblings					
unweighted N	22108	17720	2139	930	1319
None or one	0.417	0.455	1.155	2.252	2.269
2 or 3	0.376	0.409	1.145	1.832	2.179
4 or 5	0.275	0.301	0.683	1.507	1.142
6 or more	0.218	0.242	0.497	0.690	0.496
Birthplace of biological parents					
unweighted N	21675	17329	2115	916	1315
Both born in U.S.	0.625	0.685	1.814	2.621	2.171
Mother born in U.S. father foreign-born	0.119	0.126	0.388	0.929	0.605
Father born in U.S. mother foreign-born	0.147	0.158	0.476	0.961	0.748
Both foreign-born	0.520	0.573	1.509	1.569	1.431
Either or both unknown	0.057	0.063	0.102	0.278	0.000
Language other than English spoken in home					
unweighted N	22485	18028	2168	945	1344
Yes	0.709	0.792	1.348	1.478	1.065
No	0.709	0.792	1.348	1.478	1.065
Annual family income					
unweighted N	21459	17279	2037	887	1256
Less than $15,000	0.575	0.635	1.167	1.243	0.609
$15,000 to $24,999	0.385	0.420	1.030	1.689	1.806
25,000 to $34,999	0.372	0.403	1.146	2.141	1.696
$35,000 to 49,999	0.404	0.437	1.254	1.999	1.996
$50,000 or more	0.657	0.690	2.223	4.338	4.697

Table 1--Data for figures 1.1-1.4 and table 1.1. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who report various family characteristics, by school type--Continued

Characteristic	Percent of all parents	Percent of public school parents	Percent of private school parents		
			Catholic schools	Other religious schools	Non-religious schools
Education level of parents					
Two-parent families					
unweighted N	17664	13903	1794	810	1157
Neither completed high school	0.404	0.458	0.426	0.502	0.000
One did not complete high school	0.355	0.392	0.925	1.050	1.133
Both completed high school	0.594	0.623	2.296	3.407	3.848
One graduated college	0.456	0.489	1.541	1.979	2.228
Both graduated college	0.478	0.498	1.655	2.887	3.808
Single-parent families (female)					
unweighted N	3737	3197	292	103	145
Did not complete high school	0.820	0.878	1.839	3.485	0.704
Completed high school	0.909	0.960	3.191	5.356	6.824
Graduated college	0.612	0.609	3.237	4.921	6.992
Single-parent families (male)					
unweighted N	452	381	36	8	27
Did not complete high school	1.709	1.833	2.395	Low-N	Low-N
Completed high school	2.469	2.575	9.474	Low-N	Low-N
Graduated college	2.282	2.338	9.475	Low-N	Low-N
Parental-employment					
Two-parent families					
unweighted N	17644	13882	1790	815	1157
Both parents employed	0.479	0.522	1.276	3.012	3.267
Father only employed	0.417	0.442	1.427	2.959	3.158
Mother only employed	0.177	0.198	0.424	0.583	0.293
Neither employed	0.184	0.207	0.324	0.380	0.715
Single-parent families					
unweighted N	3731	3192	291	103	145
Female employed	0.912	0.977	2.095	3.912	3.762
Female not employed	0.912	0.977	2.095	3.912	3.762
unweighted N	452	381	36	8	27
Male employed	1.586	1.692	4.426	Low-N	Low-N
Male not employed	1.586	1.692	4.426	Low-N	Low-N

Table 1--Data for figures 1.1-1.4 and table 1.1. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who report various family characteristics, by school type--Continued

Characteristic	Percent of all parents	Percent of public school parents	Percent of private school parents		
			Catholic schools	Other religious schools	Non-religious schools
Parents/guardians age					
Mother/female guardian					
unweighted N	21369	17089	2082	910	1288
28 or younger	0.063	0.070	0.164	0.155	0.242
29-33	0.297	0.328	0.619	0.731	0.814
34-38	0.418	0.453	1.309	1.623	2.430
39-48	0.526	0.564	1.731	1.956	2.200
49 or older	0.253	0.251	0.789	1.373	1.113
Father/male guardian					
unweighted N	17824	14052	1796	811	1165
28 or younger	0.084	0.096	0.090	0.000	0.056
29-33	0.232	0.260	0.446	0.315	0.589
34-38	0.404	0.441	1.170	1.751	1.841
39-48	0.504	0.552	1.370	2.011	2.275
49 or older	0.323	0.349	1.121	1.505	2.319

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Table 2--Data for figures 2.1-2.8 and tables 2.1-2.6. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported talking regularly with their child about school experiences, high school plans, or education plans after high school; and who monitored television watching and set home rules, by selected background characteristics

	Talk reg abt school exper	Talk reg abt HS plan	Talk reg abt ed plan aft HS	Limit TV hrs on sch nights	Monitor type of TV progs	Limit early/ late watching	Set rules about homewk	Set rules about grades
Total	0.344	0.463	0.421	0.431	0.392	0.298	0.214	0.388
unweighted N	21955	22425	22431	21707	21725	21708	21874	21735
Socioeconomic status								
Lower 25%	0.761	0.813	0.809	0.833	0.790	0.692	0.446	0.731
unweighted N	5088	5265	5266	4960	4963	4954	5041	4962
Middle 50%	0.432	0.623	0.567	0.587	0.520	0.400	0.269	0.504
unweighted N	10475	10678	10683	10389	10402	10397	10450	10403
High 25%	0.465	0.826	0.779	0.714	0.708	0.504	0.422	0.743
unweighted N	6391	6481	6481	6357	6359	6356	6382	6369
Student race–ethnicity								
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.729	1.743	1.749	1.524	1.649	1.298	1.027	1.537
unweighted N	1315	1339	1339	1305	1303	1304	1315	1308
Hispanic	1.083	1.283	1.066	1.447	1.186	1.021	0.602	0.997
unweighted N	2594	2709	2712	2523	2525	2514	2566	2524
Black	1.009	1.130	1.134	1.015	1.003	0.789	0.490	0.912
unweighted N	2589	2679	2678	2534	2530	2523	2564	2535
White	0.346	0.531	0.481	0.461	0.454	0.328	0.261	0.449
unweighted N	15028	15255	15259	14927	14946	14950	15002	14949
American Indian	3.552	3.510	3.607	3.258	4.418	3.352	1.532	4.485
unweighted N	200	208	208	193	195	192	199	194
Student race by SES								
Low SES								
Asian/Pacific Islander	4.590	3.912	3.641	4.031	3.942	3.571	3.074	3.606
unweighted N	229	236	235	222	224	223	229	225
Hispanic	1.766	1.780	1.676	2.233	1.694	1.760	0.971	1.378
unweighted N	1250	1317	1318	1199	1193	1188	1232	1199
Black	1.405	1.554	1.626	1.515	1.542	1.236	0.904	1.396
unweighted N	1087	1125	1123	1055	1052	1049	1074	1057
White	0.976	1.034	0.945	1.086	1.083	0.898	0.624	1.069
unweighted N	2370	2428	2431	2339	2348	2349	2356	2335
American Indian	6.128	6.489	5.230	6.030	5.223	6.293	3.186	7.376
unweighted N	69	74	74	64	65	64	68	66
Middle SES								
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.430	2.561	2.437	2.415	2.513	2.092	1.518	2.412
unweighted N	553	562	563	552	549	552	553	550
Hispanic	1.894	1.921	1.508	1.539	1.533	1.359	0.744	1.387
unweighted N	1049	1087	1089	1033	1040	1034	1041	1033
Black	1.331	1.574	1.529	1.422	1.355	1.030	0.567	1.282
unweighted N	1191	1231	1232	1170	1172	1166	1184	1173
White	0.462	0.706	0.638	0.642	0.597	0.474	0.329	0.586
unweighted N	7468	7577	7578	7424	7429	7436	7458	7437
American Indian	3.992	4.793	5.084	4.564	4.956	2.809	1.396	4.306
unweighted N	106	109	109	104	105	103	106	103

Table 2--Data for figures 2.1-2.8 and tables 2.1-2.6. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported talking regularly with their child about school experiences, high school plans, or education plans after high school; and who monitored television watching and set home rules, by selected background characteristics--Continued

	Talk reg abt school exper	Talk reg abt HS plan	Talk reg abt ed plan aft HS	Limit TV hrs on sch nights	Monitor type of TV progs	Limit early/ late watching	Set rules about homewk	Set rules about grades
High SES								
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.285	2.537	2.692	2.553	2.427	1.712	1.379	2.103
unweighted N	533	541	541	531	530	529	533	533
Hispanic	2.282	3.234	3.303	2.991	3.007	2.191	2.132	2.943
unweighted N	295	305	305	291	292	292	293	292
Black	2.001	3.179	3.116	2.796	2.694	2.171	1.427	2.699
unweighted N	310	322	322	308	305	307	305	304
White	0.504	0.894	0.838	0.768	0.770	0.547	0.461	0.801
unweighted N	5190	5250	5250	5164	5169	5165	5188	5177
American Indian	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N
unweighted N	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
Family composition								
Mother & father	0.408	0.561	0.500	0.526	0.481	0.360	0.265	0.480
unweighted N	14229	14507	14509	14076	14092	14083	14168	14103
Mother & male gdn/step	0.945	1.153	1.136	1.073	0.998	0.760	0.567	0.935
unweighted N	2361	2396	2399	2340	2345	2344	2355	2345
Father & female gdn/step	2.155	2.157	1.968	2.381	2.180	1.514	1.236	2.265
unweighted N	562	574	575	557	556	555	560	556
Other two-adult	3.003	3.152	3.358	3.295	3.165	2.004	1.525	2.832
unweighted N	273	283	283	267	267	265	273	269
Single mother/guardian	0.829	0.935	0.926	0.970	0.878	0.773	0.526	0.798
unweighted N	3631	3742	3741	3587	3580	3582	3625	3588
Single father/guardian	2.672	2.567	2.515	2.707	2.803	2.459	2.112	2.543
unweighted N	437	453	453	431	434	434	437	435
Family composition by SES								
Low SES								
Mother & father	1.097	1.156	1.112	1.259	1.121	0.984	0.590	0.940
unweighted N	2438	2532	2531	2368	2374	2365	2404	2371
Other two-parent	1.872	1.957	1.868	1.892	1.812	1.410	1.060	1.831
unweighted N	805	824	826	787	789	790	801	789
Single mother	1.297	1.402	1.364	1.385	1.360	1.178	0.837	1.278
unweighted N	1521	1572	1572	1490	1484	1486	1516	1492
Single father	5.746	5.236	5.154	5.850	5.583	5.660	3.880	5.893
unweighted N	89	94	94	87	88	88	89	88
Middle SES								
Mother & father	0.536	0.763	0.683	0.746	0.639	0.510	0.349	0.652
unweighted N	6704	6827	6830	6648	6657	6657	6685	6661
Other two-parent	1.061	1.337	1.311	1.212	1.155	0.803	0.612	1.038
unweighted N	1759	1784	1786	1749	1751	1747	1757	1753
Single mother	1.187	1.321	1.354	1.446	1.346	1.033	0.653	1.265
unweighted N	1602	1650	1649	1588	1589	1588	1599	1588
Single father	3.692	3.397	3.225	3.370	3.801	3.151	3.118	3.411
unweighted N	231	238	238	229	230	231	231	230

Table 2--Data for figures 2.1-2.8 and tables 2.1-2.6. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported talking regularly with their child about school experiences, high school plans, or education plans after high school; and who monitored television watching and set home rules, by selected background characteristics--Continued

	Talk reg abt school exper	Talk reg abt HS plan	Talk reg abt ed plan aft HS	Limit TV hrs on sch nights	Monitor type of TV progs	Limit early/ late watching	Set rules about homewk	Set rules about grades
High SES								
Mother & father	0.478	0.923	0.849	0.791	0.777	0.538	0.472	0.795
unweighted N	5087	5148	5148	5060	5061	5061	5079	5071
Other two-parent	1.777	2.203	2.207	2.285	1.902	1.420	0.989	2.188
unweighted N	632	645	645	628	628	627	630	628
Single mother	1.759	2.808	2.927	2.601	2.399	2.196	1.723	2.492
unweighted N	507	519	519	508	506	507	509	507
Single father	4.294	5.288	5.218	5.486	5.164	4.487	4.316	5.364
unweighted N	117	121	121	115	116	115	117	117
Education level of parents								
Two-parent								
No HS diploma	1.578	1.391	1.412	1.702	1.711	1.422	0.797	1.312
unweighted N	1356	1412	1412	1301	1306	1298	1334	1300
One HS diploma	1.140	1.276	1.199	1.273	1.170	0.913	0.673	1.104
unweighted N	2015	2065	2068	1992	1994	1990	2006	1991
Both HS diploma	0.475	0.668	0.640	0.628	0.553	0.439	0.324	0.553
unweighted N	8008	8135	8137	7943	7947	7951	7988	7964
One college grad	0.666	1.090	1.089	0.988	0.961	0.661	0.543	0.952
unweighted N	3163	3220	3220	3145	3154	3152	3162	3150
Both college grad	0.715	1.170	1.129	1.157	1.127	0.763	0.757	1.223
unweighted N	2781	2812	2812	2764	2764	2763	2771	2772
Single mother								
No HS diploma	2.009	2.137	1.963	2.181	2.102	2.010	1.152	1.998
unweighted N	673	702	701	657	649	646	672	655
HS diploma	0.976	1.131	1.116	1.158	1.058	0.852	0.551	0.981
unweighted N	2456	2525	2525	2432	2435	2440	2452	2434
College graduate	1.968	2.885	2.840	2.584	2.446	2.074	1.882	2.691
unweighted N	492	503	503	490	488	488	492	490
Single father								
No HS diploma	8.272	7.620	7.445	8.337	8.100	8.382	6.802	8.458
unweighted N	44	47	47	43	42	43	44	43
HS diploma	3.361	3.119	3.127	3.297	3.546	2.984	2.772	3.166
unweighted N	265	275	275	262	265	265	265	264
College graduate	4.233	5.190	4.958	5.260	4.809	4.088	4.011	5.179
unweighted N	126	129	129	124	125	124	126	126

Table 2--Data for figures 2.1-2.8 and tables 2.1-2.6. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported talking regularly with their child about school experiences, high school plans, or education plans after high school; and who monitored television watching and set home rules, by selected background characteristics--Continued

	Talk reg abt school exper	Talk reg abt HS plan	Talk reg abt ed plan aft HS	Limit TV hrs on sch nights	Monitor type of TV progs	Limit early/ late watching	Set rules about homewk	Set rules about grades
Employment status of parents								
Two-parent								
Both employed	0.428	0.583	0.542	0.571	0.519	0.392	0.299	0.525
unweighted N	11411	11616	11623	11313	11327	11318	11383	11338
Father employed	0.675	0.890	0.820	0.843	0.748	0.616	0.453	0.798
unweighted N	4635	4711	4709	4586	4592	4590	4611	4594
Mother employed	1.849	2.065	2.090	2.017	2.119	1.561	1.075	1.941
unweighted N	668	687	688	654	651	651	663	652
Neither employed	2.153	2.434	2.281	2.181	2.223	1.845	1.221	2.079
unweighted N	585	604	605	567	570	569	576	567
Single mother								
Employed	0.936	1.083	1.053	1.114	1.041	0.896	0.595	0.921
unweighted N	2669	2748	2748	2648	2640	2645	2666	2643
Not employed	1.627	1.868	1.760	1.705	1.775	1.463	1.034	1.588
unweighted N	947	978	977	925	926	923	944	930
Single father								
Employed	2.837	2.694	2.611	2.758	2.937	2.587	2.224	2.617
unweighted N	389	405	405	384	387	387	389	388
Not employed	8.205	7.854	7.981	7.612	8.025	7.858	6.740	8.462
unweighted N	47	47	47	46	46	46	47	46

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Table 3--Data for tables 2.7 and 2.8. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported offering various levels of help with their child's homework, by selected background characteristics

	Seldom/ never help with homework	Help with homework 1-2 times/ month	Help with homework 1-2 times/ week	Help with homework daily	Unweighted N
Total	0.413	0.357	0.377	0.242	21819
Socioeconomic status					
Lower 25%	0.834	0.631	0.687	0.507	5031
Middle 50%	0.504	0.494	0.525	0.337	10418
High 25%	0.626	0.732	0.697	0.494	6369
Student race–ethnicity					
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.667	1.458	1.608	1.076	1310
Hispanic	1.285	0.890	1.029	0.621	2563
Black	1.104	0.847	1.015	0.863	2545
White	0.436	0.424	0.442	0.258	14979
American Indian	3.703	3.431	3.047	2.241	196
Student race by SES					
Low SES					
Asian/Pacific Islander	4.293	3.186	3.414	2.103	229
Hispanic	1.644	1.073	1.319	0.744	1233
Black	1.652	1.347	1.623	1.254	1064
White	1.134	0.909	0.934	0.660	2357
American Indian	5.321	6.027	4.161	3.192	66
Middle SES					
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.386	1.996	2.363	1.752	550
Hispanic	1.562	1.501	1.531	1.094	1040
Black	1.429	1.389	1.435	1.267	1173
White	0.551	0.565	0.620	0.359	7444
American Indian	5.212	3.953	4.678	3.065	105
High SES					
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.468	2.555	2.480	1.548	531
Hispanic	3.184	3.314	3.336	2.232	290
Black	2.810	3.091	2.972	4.176	307
White	0.670	0.809	0.761	0.487	5178
American Indian	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N	25
Family composition					
Mother & father	0.474	0.461	0.466	0.296	14171
Mother & male gdn/step	1.024	1.074	1.029	0.639	2348
Father & female gdn/step	2.352	2.324	2.205	1.367	558
Other two-adult	3.194	2.287	3.060	2.222	274
Single mother/guardian	0.953	0.866	0.894	0.564	3588
Single father/guardian	2.692	2.296	2.612	1.588	433

Table 3--Data for tables 2.7 and 2.8. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported offering various levels of help with their child's homework, by selected background characteristics--Continued

	Seldom/ never help with homework	Help with homework 1-2 times/ month	Help with homework 1-2 times/ week	Help with homework daily	Unweighted N
Family composition by SES					
Low SES					
Mother & father	1.120	0.933	1.026	0.723	2421
Other two-parent	2.079	1.609	1.585	1.202	796
Single mother	1.420	1.132	1.263	0.825	1498
Single father	5.885	4.788	4.651	4.286	87
Middle SES					
Mother & father	0.609	0.630	0.653	0.416	6676
Other two-parent	1.115	1.217	1.200	0.734	1755
Single mother	1.328	1.318	1.359	0.800	1585
Single father	3.594	3.157	3.604	1.924	230
Low SES					
Mother & father	0.701	0.822	0.797	0.548	5074
Other two-parent	1.792	2.387	2.206	1.230	629
Single mother	2.601	2.609	2.454	1.846	504
Single father	4.889	4.375	5.456	3.281	116
Education level of parents					
Two-parent					
No HS diploma	1.457	1.165	1.402	0.885	1344
One HS diploma	1.061	1.074	1.077	0.777	2007
Both HS diploma	0.549	0.551	0.577	0.374	7974
One college graduate	0.857	0.887	0.959	0.645	3159
Both college graduates	0.972	1.119	1.209	0.750	2771
Single mother					
No HS diploma	2.117	1.541	1.863	1.222	662
HS diploma	1.049	1.068	1.110	0.711	2432
College graduate	2.675	2.450	2.537	1.942	487
Single father					
No HS diploma	8.136	6.102	5.495	4.543	42
HS diploma	3.372	2.932	3.242	1.929	264
College graduate	4.657	4.295	5.088	3.250	125
Employment status of parents					
Two-parent					
Both employed	0.501	0.511	0.501	0.332	11375
Father employed	0.777	0.736	0.805	0.517	4608
Mother employed	2.020	1.932	2.084	1.285	664
Neither employed	2.579	1.810	2.145	1.423	579
Single mother					
Employed	1.066	0.998	1.044	0.634	2643
Not employed	1.808	1.456	1.555	1.136	931

Table 3--Data for tables 2.7 and 2.8. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported offering various levels of help with their child's homework, by selected background characteristics--Continued

	Seldom/ never help with homework	Help with homework 1-2 times/ month	Help with homework 1-2 times/ week	Help with homework daily	Unweighted N
Single father					
Employed	2.801	2.391	2.759	1.633	385
Not employed	8.222	7.203	6.650	4.516	47

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Table 4a--Data for figures 2.9 and 2.10 and tables 2.9-2.12. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported various levels of contact with their child's school, by selected background characteristics

	Contact school about academic performance	Contact school about academic program	Is PTA member	Attends PTA meetings	Is a school volunteer
Total	0.502	0.459	0.755	0.642	0.431
unweighted N	21164	21054	21631	21626	21428
Socioeconomic status					
Lower 25%	0.911	0.735	0.609	0.916	0.524
unweighted N	4701	4649	4927	4938	4874
Middle 50%	0.628	0.575	0.734	0.759	0.561
unweighted N	10165	10118	10338	10345	10256
High 25%	0.823	0.814	1.228	1.049	0.871
unweighted N	6297	6286	6365	6342	6297
Student race–ethnicity					
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.790	1.562	1.700	1.740	1.324
unweighted N	1270	1258	1284	1287	1271
Hispanic	1.534	1.486	1.175	2.379	1.276
unweighted N	2429	2404	2543	2556	2523
Black	1.282	1.144	1.395	1.325	0.796
unweighted N	2354	2331	2478	2480	2440
White	0.568	0.537	0.916	0.690	0.525
unweighted N	14707	14665	14912	14891	14783
American Indian	4.090	4.071	3.084	3.385	2.766
unweighted N	186	181	194	191	191
Student race by SES					
Low SES					
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.835	3.580	2.451	3.949	2.264
unweighted N	215	214	218	219	216
Hispanic	2.006	1.503	1.098	2.157	1.192
unweighted N	1157	1137	1212	1225	1203
Black	1.956	1.525	1.470	1.793	1.088
unweighted N	939	929	1017	1016	998
White	1.192	1.025	0.777	1.001	0.709
unweighted N	2256	2237	2338	2339	2318
American Indian	6.335	6.689	5.213	6.026	3.796
unweighted N	59	57	64	62	62
Middle SES					
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.719	2.400	2.542	2.686	1.735
unweighted N	530	523	534	539	530
Hispanic	1.856	2.247	1.668	3.862	1.956
unweighted N	987	982	1040	1040	1031
Black	1.464	1.627	1.533	1.684	1.158
unweighted N	1116	1102	1151	1153	1135
White	0.717	0.650	0.870	0.770	0.663
unweighted N	7323	7307	7401	7401	7348
American Indian	4.689	5.035	4.221	4.371	4.301
unweighted N	103	101	106	105	105

Table 4a--Data for figures 2.9 and 2.10 and tables 2.9-2.12. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported various levels of contact with their child's school, by selected background characteristics--Continued

	Contact school about academic performance	Contact school about academic program	Is PTA member	Attends PTA meetings	Is a school volunteer
High SES					
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.691	2.519	2.938	2.548	2.274
unweighted N	525	521	532	529	525
Hispanic	3.002	3.496	3.601	3.668	3.081
unweighted N	285	285	291	291	289
Black	2.947	3.695	3.493	3.394	2.743
unweighted N	298	299	309	310	306
White	0.881	0.869	1.353	1.142	0.956
unweighted N	5128	5121	5173	5151	5117
American Indian	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N
unweighted N	24	23	24	24	24
Family composition					
Mother & father	0.573	0.536	0.924	0.751	0.552
unweighted N	13950	13885	14112	14106	13999
Mother & male gdn/step	1.150	1.111	1.084	1.115	0.860
unweighted N	2299	2297	2339	2345	2311
Father & female gdn/step	2.427	2.376	2.022	1.991	1.301
unweighted N	553	552	555	554	551
Other two-adult	3.469	3.394	2.719	3.385	2.175
unweighted N	258	245	267	267	261
Single mother/guardian	1.012	0.915	0.990	1.034	0.644
unweighted N	3289	3263	3491	3488	3447
Single father/guardian	2.810	2.486	2.101	2.389	1.633
unweighted N	398	399	424	425	424
Family composition by SES					
Low SES					
Mother & father	1.272	1.006	0.850	1.218	0.745
unweighted N	2335	2304	2398	2408	2387
Other two-parent	1.801	1.771	1.131	1.796	1.212
unweighted N	756	749	787	787	773
Single mother	1.615	1.412	1.115	1.511	0.929
unweighted N	1328	1315	1432	1431	1410
Single father	6.074	4.621	3.179	4.026	3.227
unweighted N	74	75	84	85	83
Middle SES					
Mother & father	0.796	0.701	0.905	0.933	0.700
unweighted N	6585	6558	6642	6647	6592
Other two-parent	1.285	1.284	1.121	1.149	0.936
unweighted N	1726	1721	1743	1749	1729
Single mother	1.373	1.294	1.368	1.426	0.929
unweighted N	1475	1463	1561	1559	1544
Single father	3.732	3.283	2.392	3.103	2.158
unweighted N	213	212	222	222	223

Table 4a--Data for figures 2.9 and 2.10 and tables 2.9-2.12. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported various levels of contact with their child's school, by selected background characteristics--Continued

	Contact school about academic performance	Contact school about academic program	Is PTA member	Attends PTA meetings	Is a school volunteer
High SES					
Mother & father	0.933	0.908	1.309	1.115	1.013
unweighted N	5030	5023	5072	5051	5020
Other two-parent	2.203	2.348	2.553	2.447	1.696
unweighted N	628	624	631	630	621
Single mother	2.606	2.829	2.902	2.607	1.998
unweighted N	485	484	497	497	492
Single father	5.538	5.585	5.272	5.346	3.517
unweighted N	111	112	118	118	118
Education level of parents					
Two-parent					
No HS diploma	1.681	1.352	1.044	1.611	0.885
unweighted N	1278	1265	1331	1331	1317
One HS diploma	1.357	1.248	0.980	1.344	0.869
unweighted N	1952	1930	1985	1992	1964
Both HS diploma	0.730	0.699	0.832	0.821	0.626
unweighted N	7857	7830	7935	7944	7872
One college graduate	1.043	1.049	1.390	1.120	1.079
unweighted N	3127	3119	3152	3145	3124
Both college graduates	1.337	1.282	1.611	1.495	1.249
unweighted N	2753	2746	2776	2764	2750
Single mother					
No HS diploma	2.359	1.942	1.401	2.049	1.379
unweighted N	566	561	634	634	623
HS diploma	1.155	1.084	1.138	1.230	0.771
unweighted N	2248	2228	2365	2361	2335
College graduate	2.534	2.877	2.890	2.705	2.059
unweighted N	467	466	482	483	479
Single father					
No HS diploma	7.980	4.874	0.000	6.008	2.694
unweighted N	35	36	40	40	39
HS diploma	3.435	3.126	2.202	2.603	2.233
unweighted N	239	238	257	258	258
College graduate	5.189	5.150	4.957	5.152	3.145
unweighted N	122	123	126	126	126

Table 4a--Data for figures 2.9 and 2.10 and tables 2.9-2.12. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported various levels of contact with their child's school, by selected background characteristics--Continued

	Contact school about academic performance	Contact school about academic program	Is PTA member	Attends PTA meetings	Is a school volunteer
Employment status of parents					
Two-parent					
Both employed	0.617	0.614	0.917	0.781	0.547
unweighted N	11209	11167	11345	11328	11234
Father employed	0.905	0.876	1.143	0.951	0.864
unweighted N	4533	4507	4576	4588	4546
Mother employed	2.245	2.029	1.953	1.978	1.583
unweighted N	652	650	658	657	654
Neither employed	2.486	2.340	1.603	2.535	1.869
unweighted N	549	540	570	574	566
Single mother					
Employed	1.166	1.045	1.139	1.193	0.754
unweighted N	2440	2421	2580	2576	2549
Not employed	1.988	1.739	1.348	1.728	1.154
unweighted N	837	830	896	897	883
Single father					
Employed	2.896	2.642	2.252	2.576	1.710
unweighted N	357	359	383	383	382
Not employed	8.775	7.835	4.558	5.634	3.619
unweighted N	40	39	40	41	41

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Table 4b--Data for table 2.14. Standard errors for the percentage of parents reporting about their eighth grader's after-school supervision

	Where 8th grader went after school:					Who was at home:*				
	Neighbor sitter/ relative/ friend	After school prgm/ sports	Job/ other	Home	Unwtd N	Parent	Other adult/ older sibling	Younger sibling	No one home	Unwtd N
Total	0.234	0.372	0.113	0.400	22329	0.454	0.433	0.507	0.277	19799
Socioeconomic status										
Lower 25%	0.489	0.484	0.225	0.659	5226	0.785	0.796	0.902	0.471	4321
Middle 50%	0.325	0.431	0.149	0.494	10643	0.589	0.592	0.682	0.392	9575
High 25%	0.290	0.739	0.199	0.780	6459	0.848	0.716	0.882	0.507	5902

* Each column is independent (e.g., more than one person can be home).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Table 5--Data for tables 3.1 and 3.2. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported various levels of expectations for their child's educational attainment, by selected background characteristics

	Less than HS diploma	HS graduate	Voc/trade school	Some college	College graduate	Advanced degree
Total	0.056	0.318	0.258	0.396	0.459	0.404
unweighted N	22365	22365	22365	22365	22365	22365
Socioeconomic status						
Lower 25%	0.172	0.723	0.559	0.788	0.649	0.505
unweighted N	5224	5224	5224	5224	5224	5224
Middle 50%	0.065	0.351	0.357	0.490	0.543	0.435
unweighted N	10664	10664	10664	10664	10664	10664
High 25%	0.023	0.231	0.254	0.386	0.756	0.764
unweighted N	6476	6476	6476	6476	6476	6476
Student race–ethnicity						
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.076	1.048	0.675	1.214	1.647	2.031
unweighted N	1337	1337	1337	1337	1337	1337
Hispanic	0.202	0.899	0.610	1.021	0.995	0.962
unweighted N	2690	2690	2690	2690	2690	2690
Black	0.135	0.821	0.637	0.974	1.090	1.006
unweighted N	2674	2674	2674	2674	2674	2674
White	0.066	0.372	0.315	0.435	0.535	0.447
unweighted N	15225	15225	15225	15225	15225	15225
American Indian	1.087	3.079	1.540	3.620	3.279	2.725
unweighted N	204	204	204	204	204	204
Student race by SES						
Low SES						
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.224	3.167	1.817	3.680	3.870	3.421
unweighted N	235	235	235	235	235	235
Hispanic	0.380	1.553	0.958	1.461	1.351	1.129
unweighted N	1299	1299	1299	1299	1299	1299
Black	0.213	1.413	1.113	1.594	1.538	1.132
unweighted N	1119	1119	1119	1119	1119	1119
White	0.271	0.978	0.824	1.050	0.835	0.562
unweighted N	2415	2415	2415	2415	2415	2415
American Indian	2.356	5.215	2.524	5.870	4.948	5.338
unweighted N	71	71	71	71	71	71
Middle SES						
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.144	1.678	1.173	1.792	2.515	2.654
unweighted N	563	563	563	563	563	563
Hispanic	0.172	1.017	0.955	1.452	1.711	1.382
unweighted N	1086	1086	1086	1086	1086	1086
Black	0.212	0.959	0.782	1.229	1.569	1.375
unweighted N	1230	1230	1230	1230	1230	1230
White	0.075	0.426	0.429	0.554	0.627	0.424
unweighted N	7565	7565	7565	7565	7565	7565
American Indian	0.760	3.944	2.903	4.903	4.584	4.140
unweighted N	108	108	108	108	108	108

Table 5--Data for tables 3.1 and 3.2. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported various levels of expectations for their child's educational attainment, by selected background characteristics--Continued

	Less than HS diploma	HS graduate	Voc/trade school	Some college	College graduate	Advanced degree
High SES						
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.000	0.703	0.592	1.134	2.658	2.810
unweighted N	539	539	539	539	539	539
Hispanic	0.000	1.187	0.813	1.424	3.291	3.295
unweighted N	305	305	305	305	305	305
Black	0.000	1.429	0.750	1.556	3.348	2.868
unweighted N	324	324	324	324	324	324
White	0.026	0.246	0.285	0.432	0.802	0.820
unweighted N	5245	5245	5245	5245	5245	5245
American Indian	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N
unweighted N	25	25	25	25	25	25
Family composition						
Mother & father	0.050	0.374	0.319	0.462	0.551	0.493
unweighted N	14472	14472	14472	14472	14472	14472
Mother & male gdn/step	0.174	0.767	0.691	1.033	1.058	0.896
unweighted N	2387	2387	2387	2387	2387	2387
Father & female gdn/step	0.395	1.834	1.424	1.853	2.257	1.799
unweighted N	574	574	574	574	574	574
Other two-adult	1.131	2.699	2.309	2.943	2.789	2.041
unweighted N	282	282	282	282	282	282
Single mother/guardian	0.167	0.710	0.515	0.789	0.919	0.732
unweighted N	3726	3726	3726	3726	3726	3726
Single father/guardian	0.294	1.968	1.480	1.929	2.621	2.055
unweighted N	452	452	452	452	452	452
Family composition by SES						
Low SES						
Mother & father	0.220	1.051	0.824	1.074	0.861	0.670
unweighted N	2511	2511	2511	2511	2511	2511
Other two-parent	0.533	1.665	1.307	1.795	1.504	1.101
unweighted N	821	821	821	821	821	821
Single mother	0.303	1.305	0.885	1.319	1.241	0.897
unweighted N	1560	1560	1560	1560	1560	1560
Single father	0.000	5.159	2.200	5.171	4.727	2.978
unweighted N	94	94	94	94	94	94
Middle SES						
Mother & father	0.056	0.442	0.449	0.599	0.667	0.517
unweighted N	6817	6817	6817	6817	6817	6817
Other two-parent	0.191	0.886	0.857	1.123	1.210	1.016
unweighted N	1776	1776	1776	1776	1776	1776
Single mother	0.240	0.741	0.713	1.125	1.324	1.092
unweighted N	1647	1647	1647	1647	1647	1647
Single father	0.523	2.379	2.361	2.493	3.689	2.291
unweighted N	238	238	238	238	238	238

Table 5--Data for tables 3.1 and 3.2. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported various levels of expectations for their child's educational attainment, by selected background characteristics--Continued

	Less than HS diploma	HS graduate	Voc/trade school	Some college	College graduate	Advanced degree
High SES						
Mother & father	0.029	0.230	0.266	0.381	0.829	0.844
unweighted N	5144	5144	5144	5144	5144	5144
Other two-parent	0.000	1.047	1.095	1.657	2.330	2.062
unweighted N	646	646	646	646	646	646
Single mother	0.000	1.142	0.934	1.361	2.707	2.612
unweighted N	518	518	518	518	518	518
Single father	0.000	1.123	1.925	2.277	5.548	5.604
unweighted N	120	120	120	120	120	120
Education level of parents						
Two-parent						
No HS diploma	0.428	1.670	0.858	1.511	1.077	0.857
unweighted N	1397	1397	1397	1397	1397	1397
One HS diploma	0.209	1.057	0.839	1.153	1.098	0.819
unweighted N	2063	2063	2063	2063	2063	2063
Both HS diploma	0.059	0.401	0.432	0.583	0.642	0.461
unweighted N	8114	8114	8114	8114	8114	8114
One college graduate	0.047	0.403	0.404	0.529	1.058	0.988
unweighted N	3212	3212	3212	3212	3212	3212
Both college graduates	0.000	0.243	0.304	0.355	1.190	1.184
unweighted N	2812	2812	2812	2812	2812	2812
Single mother						
No HS diploma	0.549	2.035	1.151	1.900	1.820	1.291
unweighted N	692	692	692	692	692	692
HS diploma	0.193	0.760	0.646	0.966	1.124	0.835
unweighted N	2521	2521	2521	2521	2521	2521
College graduate	0.156	1.126	0.966	1.232	2.729	2.679
unweighted N	502	502	502	502	502	502
Single father						
No HS diploma	0.000	6.410	3.940	7.429	7.907	2.818
unweighted N	47	47	47	47	47	47
HS diploma	0.458	2.668	2.042	2.496	3.343	2.207
unweighted N	275	275	275	275	275	275
College graduate	0.000	1.179	2.268	1.698	5.211	5.175
unweighted N	128	128	128	128	128	128
Employment status of parents						
Two-parent						
Both employed	0.058	0.351	0.346	0.511	0.576	0.516
unweighted N	11591	11591	11591	11591	11591	11591
Father employed	0.088	0.636	0.544	0.702	0.917	0.795
unweighted N	4697	4697	4697	4697	4697	4697
Mother employed	0.514	1.508	1.295	1.949	1.938	1.605
unweighted N	686	686	686	686	686	686
Neither employed	0.594	1.957	1.380	1.969	1.876	1.877
unweighted N	602	602	602	602	602	602

Table 5--Data for tables 3.1 and 3.2. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported various levels of expectations for their child's educational attainment, by selected background characteristics--Continued

	Less than HS diploma	HS graduate	Voc/trade school	Some college	College graduate	Advanced degree
Single mother						
Employed	0.171	0.754	0.601	0.908	1.092	0.846
unweighted N	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740
Not employed	0.443	1.460	0.961	1.578	1.545	1.393
unweighted N	970	970	970	970	970	970
Single father						
Employed	0.328	2.069	1.620	1.836	2.756	2.209
unweighted N	404	404	404	404	404	404
Not employed	0.000	5.097	2.789	7.880	7.934	5.040
unweighted N	47	47	47	47	47	47

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Table 6--Data for tables 3.3 and 3.4. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who strongly agreed or agreed with various statements about their child's school, by selected background characteristics

	Homework worthwhile	Child is challenged	Child is working hard	Child enjoys school	Parents have say in policy	Parents work together for school
Total	0.246	0.389	0.386	0.341	0.501	0.444
unweighted N	21815	21559	21808	21827	21172	21111
Socioeconomic status						
Lower 25%	0.438	0.740	0.706	0.758	0.886	0.761
unweighted N	5027	4863	5009	5017	4822	4837
Middle 50%	0.334	0.518	0.509	0.474	0.608	0.545
unweighted N	10411	10324	10419	10435	10091	10050
High 25%	0.451	0.706	0.707	0.546	0.821	0.773
unweighted N	6376	6371	6379	6374	6258	6224
Student race–ethnicity						
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.960	1.482	1.433	1.070	1.612	1.350
unweighted N	1300	1287	1302	1304	1251	1256
Hispanic	0.682	0.897	0.955	0.877	1.131	0.991
unweighted N	2580	2512	2577	2583	2478	2475
Black	0.556	1.032	0.959	0.715	1.122	1.076
unweighted N	2568	2484	2559	2550	2454	2474
White	0.306	0.452	0.456	0.412	0.597	0.532
unweighted N	14949	14866	14950	14970	14584	14504
American Indian	2.103	3.587	4.243	2.950	3.900	3.290
unweighted N	194	190	194	194	186	186
Student race by SES						
Low SES						
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.593	3.747	3.703	2.985	3.872	3.293
unweighted N	221	219	222	222	206	210
Hispanic	1.150	1.641	1.382	1.350	1.439	1.246
unweighted N	1237	1193	1231	1233	1182	1185
Black	0.668	1.523	1.291	1.073	1.678	1.429
unweighted N	1071	1023	1067	1062	1023	1033
White	0.660	0.999	1.040	1.105	1.180	1.081
unweighted N	2352	2286	2341	2352	2269	2266
American Indian	2.574	5.361	4.178	4.242	5.373	4.995
unweighted N	66	63	65	65	64	64
Middle SES						
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.475	2.166	2.143	1.536	2.204	2.261
unweighted N	549	543	549	550	527	527
Hispanic	0.840	1.492	1.691	1.162	1.831	1.554
unweighted N	1048	1026	1050	1055	1007	1004
Black	0.941	1.401	1.337	1.059	1.633	1.528
unweighted N	1186	1149	1183	1178	1131	1142
White	0.395	0.596	0.597	0.567	0.710	0.629
unweighted N	7419	7400	7428	7443	7224	7178
American Indian	3.078	4.731	5.395	4.359	5.513	4.719
unweighted N	103	102	104	104	97	97

Table 6--Data for tables 3.3 and 3.4. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who strongly agreed or agreed with various statements about their child's school, by selected background characteristics--Continued

	Homework worthwhile	Child is challenged	Child is working hard	Child enjoys school	Parents have say in policy	Parents work together for school
High SES						
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.133	2.146	1.769	1.565	2.286	2.009
unweighted N	530	525	531	532	518	519
Hispanic	1.854	2.884	2.881	1.936	3.236	2.918
unweighted N	295	293	296	295	289	286
Black	1.566	2.533	2.868	1.565	3.067	2.715
unweighted N	310	311	308	309	299	299
White	0.507	0.770	0.775	0.614	0.917	0.854
unweighted N	5178	5180	5181	5175	5091	5060
American Indian	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N	Low-N
unweighted N	25	25	25	25	25	25
Family composition						
Mother & father	0.285	0.449	0.427	0.403	0.608	0.535
unweighted N	14161	14030	14162	14171	13788	13759
Mother & male gdn/step	0.681	1.027	1.012	0.876	1.167	1.039
unweighted N	2345	2323	2341	2350	2279	2260
Father & female gdn/step	1.740	2.132	2.507	2.449	2.241	2.222
unweighted N	556	556	555	557	541	541
Other two-adult	2.099	2.744	2.985	2.818	3.288	3.096
unweighted N	271	265	267	271	261	258
Single mother/guardian	0.538	0.845	0.930	0.777	0.930	0.876
unweighted N	3605	3523	3603	3602	3460	3447
Single father/guardian	1.615	2.245	2.368	2.368	2.464	2.301
unweighted N	434	433	437	435	427	419
Family composition by SES						
Low SES						
Mother & father	0.658	1.033	0.960	0.983	1.222	1.016
unweighted N	2424	2347	2416	2422	2328	2341
Other two-parent	1.157	1.739	1.915	2.121	1.989	1.747
unweighted N	797	773	785	794	774	770
Single mother	0.735	1.245	1.209	1.209	1.331	1.244
unweighted N	1497	1446	1497	1495	1434	1430
Single father	2.856	4.232	5.009	4.460	5.524	4.745
unweighted N	85	82	85	83	80	79
Middle SES						
Mother & father	0.398	0.610	0.596	0.573	0.739	0.670
unweighted N	6660	6618	6674	6678	6477	6448
Other two-parent	0.773	1.179	1.274	1.066	1.315	1.262
unweighted N	1742	1737	1741	1749	1684	1675
Single mother	0.909	1.231	1.330	1.155	1.384	1.347
unweighted N	1602	1567	1597	1599	1535	1536
Single father	2.186	3.035	3.145	3.390	3.329	3.161
unweighted N	232	233	234	234	230	225

Table 6--Data for tables 3.3 and 3.4. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who strongly agreed or agreed with various statements about their child's school, by selected background characteristics--Continued

	Homework worthwhile	Child is challenged	Child is working hard	Child enjoys school	Parents have say in policy	Parents work together for school
High SES						
Mother & father	0.480	0.768	0.713	0.580	0.934	0.827
unweighted N	5077	5065	5072	5071	4983	4970
Other two-parent	1.906	2.225	2.250	1.597	2.308	2.080
unweighted N	633	634	637	635	623	614
Single mother	1.331	2.414	2.637	2.111	2.592	2.475
unweighted N	505	509	508	507	490	481
Single father	3.521	4.608	4.937	3.700	5.498	5.263
unweighted N	117	118	118	118	117	115
Education level of parents						
Two-parent						
No HS diploma	0.888	1.322	1.357	1.396	1.520	1.333
unweighted N	1345	1288	1332	1346	1279	1280
One HS diploma	0.730	1.085	1.076	1.060	1.270	1.100
unweighted N	2006	1967	2000	2008	1942	1941
Both HS diploma	0.385	0.589	0.560	0.512	0.704	0.623
unweighted N	7948	7900	7960	7962	7739	7709
One college graduate	0.561	0.858	0.895	0.708	1.134	0.956
unweighted N	3157	3147	3158	3154	3083	3069
Both college graduates	0.690	0.999	0.956	0.830	1.265	1.057
unweighted N	2776	2771	2776	2777	2727	2720
Single mother						
No HS diploma	0.884	1.775	1.718	1.584	1.973	1.697
unweighted N	661	637	657	659	630	628
HS diploma	0.696	0.980	1.087	0.981	1.100	1.051
unweighted N	2448	2391	2446	2444	2352	2348
College graduate	1.390	2.456	2.583	1.875	2.652	2.408
unweighted N	485	485	489	488	468	461
Single father						
No HS diploma	6.431	7.153	7.241	6.787	7.468	7.630
unweighted N	43	41	43	42	40	41
HS diploma	1.660	2.782	3.011	2.924	3.276	2.930
unweighted N	264	264	266	265	260	254
College graduate	3.654	4.357	4.603	3.987	5.226	5.183
unweighted N	125	126	126	126	125	122
Employment status of parents						
Two-parent						
Both employed	0.329	0.502	0.474	0.431	0.627	0.559
unweighted N	11358	11278	11365	11366	11067	11022
Father employed	0.522	0.740	0.763	0.684	0.920	0.830
unweighted N	4613	4568	4603	4614	4482	4472
Mother employed	1.290	1.728	1.737	1.781	2.163	1.909
unweighted N	661	653	662	663	636	641
Neither employed	1.563	2.002	2.054	1.839	2.389	2.185
unweighted N	573	548	569	575	556	560

Table 6--Data for tables 3.3 and 3.4. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who strongly agreed or agreed with various statements about their child's school, by selected background characteristics--Continued

	Homework worthwhile	Child is challenged	Child is working hard	Child enjoys school	Parents have say in policy	Parents work together for school
Single mother						
Employed	0.654	0.957	1.094	0.899	1.122	1.007
unweighted N	2659	2618	2658	2655	2549	2540
Not employed	0.919	1.588	1.584	1.456	1.681	1.543
unweighted N	930	890	929	931	896	892
Single father						
Employed	1.694	2.324	2.524	2.523	2.641	2.457
unweighted N	387	386	390	389	383	375
Not employed	5.257	6.438	7.424	7.111	7.815	7.444
unweighted N	46	46	46	45	43	43

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Table 7--Data for tables 4.1-4.3. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported talking regularly with their child about school experiences, high school plans, or education plans after high school; and who monitored televsion watching and set home rules, by school attributes

	Talk reg abt school exper	Talk reg abt HS plan	Talk reg abt ed plan aft HS	Limit TV hrs on sch nights	Monitor type of TV progs	Limit early/ late watching	Set rules about homewk	Set rules about grades
Total	0.344	0.463	0.421	0.431	0.392	0.298	0.214	0.388
unweighted N	21955	22425	22431	21707	21725	21708	21874	21735
School type								
Public	0.376	0.485	0.454	0.466	0.424	0.325	0.233	0.419
unweighted N	17583	17974	17980	17387	17396	17382	17521	17402
Catholic	0.831	1.651	1.491	1.427	0.952	0.851	0.576	1.293
unweighted N	2119	2165	2164	2095	2099	2096	2114	2103
Other religious	1.380	2.829	2.120	1.628	1.818	1.367	1.101	1.821
unweighted N	930	943	944	916	919	920	925	922
Non-religious private	1.497	2.208	2.057	2.307	3.247	1.115	1.010	3.374
unweighted N	1323	1343	1343	1309	1311	1310	1314	1308
School climate								
School problems								
Serious	1.605	3.331	1.914	2.023	2.168	1.264	1.064	1.775
unweighted N	974	989	988	967	969	967	969	968
Moderate	0.437	0.570	0.517	0.554	0.487	0.356	0.253	0.509
unweighted N	14537	14801	14803	14385	14394	14391	14486	14416
Low	0.629	0.876	0.821	0.773	0.739	0.596	0.435	0.680
unweighted N	6066	6235	6240	5984	5990	5980	6042	5980
Teacher engagement								
Low	0.700	0.840	0.712	0.753	0.752	0.614	0.453	0.697
unweighted N	5939	6073	6073	5868	5860	5856	5915	5863
Moderate	0.437	0.618	0.573	0.582	0.510	0.373	0.259	0.537
unweighted N	13071	13348	13352	12924	12944	12934	13026	12958
High	0.965	1.727	1.414	1.512	1.393	0.796	0.680	1.270
unweighted N	2547	2584	2586	2524	2529	2528	2536	2523
Academic press								
Low	0.840	0.969	0.824	0.978	0.850	0.698	0.500	0.741
unweighted N	4410	4526	4526	4366	4367	4358	4405	4358
Moderate	0.473	0.653	0.604	0.610	0.577	0.414	0.309	0.577
unweighted N	10693	10902	10907	10572	10596	10584	10651	10598
High	0.620	1.033	0.892	0.844	0.748	0.539	0.376	0.829
unweighted N	6453	6576	6577	6377	6369	6375	6420	6387
School-initiated contact								
Low	0.716	0.770	0.757	0.820	0.812	0.654	0.469	0.770
unweighted N	5056	5146	5149	5009	5014	5015	5051	5019
Moderate	0.467	0.634	0.596	0.562	0.552	0.417	0.309	0.550
unweighted N	9498	9608	9610	9436	9451	9445	9474	9452
High	0.562	0.791	0.740	0.736	0.667	0.465	0.381	0.729
unweighted N	6296	6359	6359	6264	6266	6263	6287	6275

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Table 8--Data for table 4.4. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported offering various levels of help with their child's homework, by school attributes

	Seldom/ never help with homework	Help with homework 1-2 times/ month	Help with homework 1-2 times/ week	Help with homework daily	Unweighted N
Total	0.413	0.357	0.377	0.242	21819
School type					
Public	0.447	0.386	0.408	0.260	17473
Catholic	1.319	1.174	1.212	0.920	2113
Other religious	1.967	1.892	1.896	1.132	927
Non-religious private	2.159	1.083	1.797	1.318	1306
School climate					
School problems					
Serious	0.952	0.776	0.790	0.604	4475
Moderate	0.534	0.467	0.502	0.316	11963
Low	0.840	0.789	0.817	0.482	5084
Teacher engagement					
Low	0.773	0.634	0.737	0.491	5913
Moderate	0.583	0.500	0.518	0.330	11329
High	0.896	0.889	0.831	0.564	4259
Academic press					
Low	0.937	0.760	0.772	0.574	4401
Moderate	0.570	0.509	0.548	0.341	10663
High	0.740	0.689	0.686	0.442	6437
School-initiated contact					
Low	0.813	0.691	0.685	0.436	5031
Moderate	0.543	0.523	0.548	0.340	9457
High	0.665	0.694	0.691	0.490	6259

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Table 9--Data for table 4.5. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders' parents who reported various levels of contact with their child's school, by school attributes

	Contact school about academic performance	Contact school about academic program	Is PTA member	Attends PTA meetings	Is a school volunteer
Total	0.502	0.459	0.755	0.642	0.431
unweighted N	21164	21054	21631	21626	21428
School type					
Public	0.551	0.500	0.806	0.682	0.398
unweighted N	16924	16827	17324	17315	17133
Catholic	1.411	1.261	2.348	2.281	2.209
unweighted N	2043	2037	2086	2091	2085
Other religious	1.923	2.498	3.453	3.146	2.800
unweighted N	904	899	915	913	907
Non-religious private	2.665	2.307	4.704	5.492	4.819
unweighted N	1293	1291	1306	1307	1303
School climate					
School problems					
Serious	2.235	2.139	4.217	3.956	4.652
unweighted N	950	947	966	964	962
Moderate	0.595	0.546	1.000	0.842	0.602
unweighted N	14050	13985	14319	14325	14197
Low	1.058	0.946	1.273	1.121	0.581
unweighted N	5800	5762	5964	5956	5892
Teacher engagement					
Low	0.958	0.855	1.431	1.243	0.805
unweighted N	5682	5640	5814	5821	5768
Moderate	0.668	0.613	0.989	0.861	0.599
unweighted N	12649	12586	12905	12904	12776
High	1.502	1.302	2.785	2.391	2.493
unweighted N	2450	2450	2510	2500	2487
Academic press					
Low	1.184	0.983	1.425	1.763	0.760
unweighted N	4211	4191	4330	4331	4292
Moderate	0.672	0.623	1.094	0.847	0.661
unweighted N	10319	10251	10523	10529	10415
High	1.056	0.964	1.597	1.335	1.187
unweighted N	6250	6233	6375	6364	6323
School-initiated contact					
Low	0.708	0.557	0.798	0.799	0.398
unweighted N	4960	4962	5067	5061	5024
Moderate	0.672	0.577	0.853	0.755	0.505
unweighted N	9327	9316	9479	9475	9398
High	0.724	0.767	1.125	0.979	0.837
unweighted N	6196	6183	6256	6256	6216

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Table 10--Data for table 5.1. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders who performed below basic in reading or math proficiency, by SES and varying levels of parental involvement

	Below basic – Reading			Below basic – Math		
	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES
Total	0.773	0.390	0.338	0.871	0.511	0.481
unwtd N	4766	9929	6121	4677	9567	5863
Talk about school experiences						
Never	4.890	9.005	Low-N	5.502	8.346	Low-N
unwtd N	82	39	6	79	36	6
Rarely	3.132	2.978	1.974	3.397	3.705	5.518
unwtd N	269	165	48	272	167	49
Occasionally	1.467	0.894	0.938	1.544	1.043	1.358
unwtd N	1283	1722	625	1271	1657	612
Regularly	0.907	0.443	0.365	1.054	0.549	0.488
unwtd N	2957	7802	5350	2887	7514	5107
Talk about HS plans						
Never	3.481	2.697	1.735	3.531	3.219	6.510
unwtd N	202	168	48	200	161	47
Rarely	2.085	1.540	2.056	2.210	1.644	2.022
unwtd N	532	663	310	521	647	300
Occasionally	1.042	0.538	0.541	1.232	0.674	0.695
unwtd N	1983	4393	2479	1948	4211	2371
Regularly	1.111	0.603	0.420	1.241	0.680	0.659
unwtd N	2022	4679	3276	1981	4522	3137
Talk about post HS						
Never	2.404	2.447	3.106	2.666	3.118	5.585
unwtd N	391	251	61	384	241	61
Rarely	1.832	1.225	1.615	1.905	1.480	1.624
unwtd N	701	965	478	692	926	459
Occasionally	1.044	0.516	0.498	1.154	0.644	0.611
unwtd N	2061	4837	3000	2025	4646	2873
Regularly	1.222	0.620	0.465	1.414	0.751	0.780
unwtd N	1588	3854	2574	1550	3732	2462
Help with homework						
Seldom/never	1.123	0.661	0.643	1.262	0.759	0.878
unwtd N	1961	2728	1408	1914	2613	1366
Once/twice a month	1.384	0.607	0.546	1.526	0.827	0.782
unwtd N	990	2735	1890	972	2638	1805
Once/twice a week	1.321	0.695	0.610	1.512	0.830	0.811
unwtd N	1128	3191	2102	1119	3082	1997
Almost everyday	2.538	1.355	1.281	2.569	1.563	1.674
unwtd N	461	1025	607	453	998	586

Table 10--Data for table 5.1. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders who performed below basic in reading or math proficiency, by SES and varying levels of parental involvement--Continued

	Below basic – Reading			Below basic – Math		
	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES
Rule about TV programs						
Yes	0.900	0.439	0.412	1.059	0.571	0.517
unwtd N	2677	6876	4247	2619	6639	4068
No	1.160	0.731	0.605	1.382	0.860	0.848
unwtd N	1804	2785	1749	1780	2672	1677
Rule early/late TV						
Yes	0.836	0.421	0.360	1.004	0.545	0.504
unwtd N	3471	8286	5143	3400	7989	4930
No	1.610	0.956	0.771	1.615	1.207	1.210
unwtd N	1007	1372	850	992	1318	812
Rule TV hours school day						
Yes	0.965	0.487	0.451	1.136	0.647	0.593
unwtd N	2843	5907	3775	2794	5722	3614
No	1.185	0.556	0.486	1.254	0.708	0.680
unwtd N	1638	3741	2220	1603	3576	2130
Rule maintaining GPA						
Yes	0.881	0.439	0.433	1.000	0.574	0.579
unwtd N	3316	7287	3849	3269	7006	3697
No	1.448	0.737	0.498	1.607	0.870	0.689
unwtd N	1166	2379	2158	1130	2306	2058
PTA member						
Yes	1.980	0.674	0.455	2.182	0.790	0.581
unwtd N	538	2867	3344	514	2773	3187
No	0.801	0.459	0.514	0.956	0.621	0.727
unwtd N	3904	6726	2657	3847	6468	2563
Attend PTA meetings						
Yes	1.306	0.656	0.542	1.556	0.780	0.667
unwtd N	1316	3463	2924	1282	3366	2803
No	0.882	0.449	0.447	0.999	0.607	0.671
unwtd N	3132	6138	3054	3087	5882	2924
School volunteer						
Yes	1.884	0.786	0.656	2.292	0.963	0.898
unwtd N	460	1798	1942	441	1735	1867
No	0.814	0.440	0.414	0.968	0.558	0.566
unwtd N	3929	7720	3996	3868	7430	3826

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Longitudinal Study of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey and First Followup Student Survey."

Table 11--Data for figure 5.1. Standard errors for percentages of low-SES 1988 eighth grader's scoring below basic in mathematics or reading, by amount of homework help parents offer

	Low SES score below basic math	Low SES score below basic reading
Total	0.871	0.773
unweighted N	4677	4766
Help with homework		
Seldom/never	1.262	1.123
unweighted N	1914	1961
Once/twice a month	1.526	1.384
unweighted N	972	990
Once/twice a week	1.512	1.093
unweighted N	1119	1128
Almost everyday	2.569	2.538
unweighted N	453	461

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey."

Table 12--Data for table 5.2 and figures 5.2 and 5.3. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders who dropped out of school between 8th and 10th grade, by SES and varying levels of parental involvement

	Percent dropped out		
	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES
Total	1.374	0.541	0.660
unwtd N	3742	7810	4744
Talk about school experiences			
Never	8.084	23.412	Low-N
unwtd N	70	32	3
Rarely	4.526	1.269	1.005
unwtd N	215	116	32
Occasionally	1.803	1.053	0.552
unwtd N	1001	1349	461
Regularly	1.898	0.561	0.210
unwtd N	2315	6165	4191
Talk about HS plans			
Never	3.878	12.791	3.406
unwtd N	164	131	42
Rarely	2.927	0.762	2.308
unwtd N	432	545	255
Occasionally	2.520	0.946	0.201
unwtd N	1567	3567	2002
Regularly	1.706	0.401	1.208
unwtd N	1563	3548	2440
Talk about post HS			
Never	3.442	9.346	0.000
unwtd N	315	185	43
Rarely	6.173	0.681	0.403
unwtd N	549	750	341
Occasionally	1.241	0.818	0.290
unwtd N	1632	3889	2385
Regularly	1.776	0.604	1.496
unwtd N	1230	2971	1970
Help with homework			
Seldom/never	1.660	0.698	0.615
unwtd N	1543	2133	1084
Once/twice a month	1.559	0.405	0.433
unwtd N	794	2212	1461
Once/twice a week	4.162	1.214	0.149
unwtd N	883	2511	1660
Almost everyday	2.473	1.250	0.192
unwtd N	342	771	467

Table 12--Data for table 5.2 and figures 5.2 and 5.3. Standard errors for percentage of 1988 eighth graders who dropped out of school between 8th and 10th grade, by SES and varying levels of parental involvement--Continued

	Percent dropped out		
	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES
Rule about TV programs			
Yes	1.286	0.613	0.203
unwtd N	2072	5414	3279
No	2.886	1.092	0.491
unwtd N	1448	2189	1382
Rule early/late TV			
Yes	0.974	0.549	0.221
unwtd N	2706	6504	3994
No	4.833	2.064	0.320
unwtd N	807	1101	670
Rule TV hours school day			
Yes	0.883	0.720	0.224
unwtd N	2202	4587	2873
No	3.257	0.808	0.365
unwtd N	1309	3010	1791
Rule maintaining GPA			
Yes	1.694	0.603	0.215
unwtd N	2574	5707	3004
No	2.240	1.173	0.400
unwtd N	938	1902	1668
PTA member			
Yes	2.611	0.323	1.143
unwtd N	417	2225	2625
No	1.609	0.750	0.433
unwtd N	3094	5334	2040
Attend PTA meetings			
Yes	1.681	0.433	1.443
unwtd N	1015	2599	2254
No	1.927	0.790	0.275
unwtd N	2507	4972	2396
School volunteer			
Yes	8.878	0.368	2.168
unwtd N	362	1365	1446
No	1.102	0.654	0.221
unwtd N	3115	6134	3171

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Longitudinal Study of 1988: "Base-Year Parent Survey and First Followup Student Survey."

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